

Iulia-Anamaria Ghidiu

TRANSATLANTIC INTEGRATION
AFTER THE COLD WAR.
ROMANIA - A STRATEGIC PILLAR
WITHIN THE EURO - ATLANTIC COMMUNITY



Presă Universitară Clujeană

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PRESA UNIVERSITARĂ CLUJEANĂ

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INTRODUCTION

The end of the Cold War has confirmed that the Euro-Atlantic relation accounts for more than an interest-based alliance. The West meant also a unity at a conceptual level: liberal democracy, human rights or the welfare state capitalism. Altogether, they represent the institutional expression of shared western values.

Even though the West was not a homogenous entity in itself, the belief in a common project, in the things that brings us closer over what is dividing us can be traced back in history.

Comparable to other economic and geographical areas, the transatlantic market has had and it will continue to bear an extraordinary potential to develop the societies of Europe and North America as well as boosting their negotiation power at international level.

We could see how the elimination of the Russian intimidation and the Communist dictatorship on the European continent raised questions about the strategic cooperation within the North Atlantic Alliance, if this cooperation is still justified or not, had the common enemy was defeated. Nevertheless, NATO has survived and it continues to adapt to the present global security and political environment, alongside with independent EU processes to develop its Common Security and Defense Policy.

There are authors arguing that, despite distinctions between the European and the American cultural or environmental models, the general tendency of the two societies separated by the Atlantic was to converge on their economic integration path, of course, on the basis of an accelerated process of globalization.

At global level, through the commercial flows traversing it, the transatlantic market proved to be a highly competitive one, bearing an enormous potential to develop the two blocks' economies.

Even so, the liberal legacy could be threatened (even from an ideology point of view) by emerging new markets (like China, India, the New Silk Road, to mention just a few) on one hand, and by the absence of a consolidated dialogue between the two partners in the last period, on the other. In the current multipolar world, we can speak about the possible prefiguration of a new triangle EU-China-US, with gains and losses, opportunities and challenges within the bilateral relation between each two of them.

The terrorist threat, hybrid and cyber warfare are all common enemies of the UE and the US imposing another dimension for strong cooperation between the two blocks.

Therefore, the topic of the evolution of the transatlantic relation after the Cold War is, in fact, a very complex puzzle combining many common interests, common challenges, pros and cons, individual perceptions and also shared Western democratic values, a topic of contemporary debate that challenges even by the multiple perspectives it can be approached from.

The main interrogations guiding the research focus on the following aspects:

1. What are the main pillars/policies supporting/distorting a positive trend of the transatlantic relation regarding politics, ideology, trade, energy, environment, culture?
2. To what extent can Romania influence the evolution of the EU-US relation in the future, as both a pro-European and pro-American country?
3. What are the *best-case*, the *most probable case* and the *worst-case* scenarios regarding future cooperation between the EU and the US?

DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH

The present doctoral research follows the path of scientific-academic investigations particularly within the sphere of transatlantic relations and, automatically, in the broader sphere of International Relations and European Studies. It focuses on the historical period from 1990 (marking the end of the Cold-War and the bipolar world order) until the present days.

Approaching the subject from a European perspective on multiple fields of transatlantic cooperation, such as politics, ideology, economy, commerce, energy and environment, defense and security, culture and youth,

the thesis develops a comprehensive analysis, chronologically following several historic periods (structured mainly by the European Commission's mandates criteria), each of them with their own particularities, with the aim to reconstruct the evolution of the transatlantic partnership, of investigating different stages of integration of the transatlantic market.

Concerning the units of analysis, the main state actors whose behavior we have investigated and reflected upon are the European Union, the United States, China, Romania, EU Member States, Canada and Russia. Institutions such as the European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Council, the European External Action Service, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and NATO were all subject of the current research. The NGO sector, the business community, stakeholders in the cultural and artistic realm as well as international organizations were also considered in our scientific research enterprise.

Professionals and high-level officials as well as the wider public of different ages and specializations having accepted to respond to our interviews or to take part in the survey we have conducted represent the unit of observation that we considered bringing added value to the present theoretical investigation in the field of International Relations and, more precisely, transatlantic studies.

By researching a number of specific fields of transatlantic cooperation, we have employed a sectorial assessment, revealing seized opportunities (in the form of bilateral encounters, joint agreements, institutional frameworks, sectorial mechanisms) and perceived internal and external challenges/threats to the EU-US partnership relation.

Specific concepts/variables were used to define and describe Europeans and Americans perspective on matters of politics, trade, security and defense, energy, environmental sustainability or cultural policies. We mention here as relevant concepts multilateralism, unilateralism and bilateralism, soft power, hard power, hegemonic actor, shared Western values, European integration, strategic autonomy, defense identity, permanent structured cooperation, security architecture, (EU-NATO) complementarity, collective defense, strategic competition, geopolitical triangle, free market, mutual recognition (of standards), harmonization process, climate neutrality, biological crisis, renewable energy, energy dependency, cultural goods, creative industries, "cultural exception" and cultural diplomacy.

The research methodology includes both qualitative and quantitative instruments. Qualitatively speaking, we have focused on political discourse analysis, secondary data analysis (applied to books, scientific and newspaper articles, EU official documents, joint EU-US/NATO declarations etc.) and comparative historical analysis. Another substantial input to the research qualitative methodology consists of semi-structured interviews that we have conducted with professionals in relevant fields and diplomatic personnel.

We were honored to be granted an interview by the Romanian Permanent Representative to the UN, in which he discussed UN multilateralism, Romania's pro-Europeanism and pro-Atlanticism.

On economic (commercial) issues and Romania's role and position within the transatlantic market we have discussed with the President of The Romanian American Business Council (RABC), a center bearing expertise in conducting business with Romania and the United States, providing professional consultancy for business and the community, in their quest for the right advocacy tools to access a number of specific services. RABC has two offices: one in New York and one in Bucharest.

On EU-NATO relations, the European Defense and Security Identity, PESCO, European strategic autonomy, Romania's most important assets in terms of security cooperation and Bucharest 9 initiative, we have discussed with a senior researcher in the fields of international relations, national and international security, NATO and EU, studies on totalitarian regimes. He has worked in various senior positions within the Romanian Ministry of Defense, including that of the General Director for Defense and Planning Policy, responsible for NATO and EU policies. He had also served as Head of the Defense Section of the Romanian Permanent Delegation at NATO Headquarters in Brussels.

Also, regarding strategic energy projects developed in Romania, with a significant financial support from the EU relevant institutions (EBRD, EIB) and US technical contribution for pipeline construction, we have interviewed the Director of the Department for Strategy and Corporate Management at Transgaz, the National Gas Transmission Company in Romania.

On transatlantic cultural relations and cultural diplomacy, we have discussed with the Director of the German Cultural Center in Cluj-Napoca and a German language teacher from the same institution, as well as with two Fulbright students having studied in the United States.

The comprehensive discussion with the vice-president of the Euro-Atlantic Resilience Centre in Bucharest has contributed significantly to the development of the scenarios regarding the future of transatlantic relations.

Quantitatively, we have conducted an opinion survey among the Romanian population. Respondents were selected from various fields of activity/study (including European Studies and International Relations, Diplomacy, Military, Sociology, History, Economy, Finances-Banking, Geography, Journalism, Pedagogy, Psychology, IT), they are of different ages (between 18-72), both from the urban (mostly) and the rural areas, both women and men. Respondents in Romania were selected from different regions of the country.

Additionally, we have used statistical data available (mainly from Eurostat, Statista, ECFR, GMFUS-*Transatlantic Trends*) to compare and contrast social or macroeconomic trends as part of the evolution of the transatlantic cooperation from 1990 until present.

On a particular note, as for its case study, the research is investigating the current and potential role of Romania as a strategic actor within the Euro-Atlantic relation, from an integrative perspective, in other words, facilitating efforts to stimulate future EU-US exchanges in various fields of cooperation (Romania within NATO, Romania as EU member state, Romania as a pro-European and pro-American country in the East-Central European region). This can subsequently provide valuable, updated information for the academic community as well as for relevant decision-makers in Romania.

From the controversial debates around the TTIP initiative, the doctoral research launches an analysis of future EU-US trade prospects, investigating the two parts' interest and benefits of concluding such an agreement.

In its concluding chapter, the doctoral thesis intends to model a number of scenarios regarding the future of the transatlantic relation, considering (geo)political, geostrategic, economic, and ideological influential factors.

The interviews conducted account for a deeper understanding of the subject - thus facilitated by experienced and professional viewpoints on the research interest -, the implications of past and present characteristics for the transatlantic community's trends of tomorrow.

OVERVIEW

The first chapter, entitled "Configuration of the transatlantic relation", provides a necessary contextualization of the topic from a historic and geopolitical perspective.

Contemporary International Relations display an interesting ambivalence, in the sense that peace, stability and cohesion co-exist with instability and (new types of) warfare. This inevitably marks continuity with the past, but we cannot overlook the change agents represented by globalization, the technological advancement, resurgence of nationalist tendencies or the proliferation of terrorism.

The Western world as a strategic concept resulted from the US-Western Europe alliance. The American involvement in the First World War established Washington's position in Europe that will have shifted lately towards disengagement in the inter-war period, and it was only disrupted by the US engagement into the Second World War on the Allies' side.

NATO became the most relevant institutional framework in the field of security and defense, preventing hegemonic ambitions of any continental power that could have challenged the post-war European order. The Cold War has nevertheless marked a disruption between East-Central Europe and the US, as totalitarian regimes were taking shape in the new communist countries. Ties were limited and maintained on a bilateral basis, intensified mainly after 1970 in the case of Romania.

The fall of the Berlin Wall has been a turning point in the ideological orientation of Eastern Europe. However, ex-communist states embarked on the transition process developed at different paces, according to their own internal environment. Transition implied four distinct dimensions: liberalization, democratization, Occidentalization/Europeanization and integration.

The Transatlantic Declaration on EC-US Relations, dating from 1990, has put into a long-term perspective the traditional partnership, acknowledging that Euro-Atlantic solidarity is the key to ensure peace and liberty, to developing free market economies and to rebuild the European continent.

Post-Cold War transatlantic relations evolved on two dimensions: the US continued to be present in Europe and the European states have emancipated, gradually strengthening the EU integration process, as to cover a complex set of capabilities and competences, including in the field of defense.

Nowadays, there is a trend to frame transatlantic relations from both an integrative and a dividing perspective. While some scholars discuss the concept of “transatlantic community” as having surpassed the symbolic “need of the moment” enabling them to act together, others believe that, in spite of a number of divergences at policy level, societies on the two sides of the Atlantic have rather converged because of economic integration encompassed by the wider process of globalization.

The second chapter, entitled “Power politics, symbolic values and ideologies in the transatlantic community”, analyzed the political incentive for cooperation as it appeared in the EU leaders’ discourses on transatlantic engagement.

We distinguished between individual principles and a common set of Western values. Differences were identified between European institutionalism, (“cherry-picking”, alliance-based) multilateralism, soft power model, “unity in diversity” and secularism and the American unilateralism, exceptionalism, hard power model, hegemonic tendencies and spirituality, a messianic mission to intervene abroad.

Despite divergent tendencies in European and American foreign policy principles visible in the American (mostly) unilateral versus European multilateral approaches, the two powers share significant political and ideological values acting as a catalyst for change in the post-Cold War international system. Democracy, freedom, the rule of law, respect for human rights are all part of “the legacy of the West”, opposing the communist credo, going beyond the transatlantic nature of the relationship.

The “Transatlantic Declaration on EC-US relations” has signaled the consolidation of the “transatlantic community” paradigm, instead of a basic EU-US cooperation relation.

The political factor was considered a strong pillar to support economic progress.

Post-1990 European political discourse has underlined growing support for EU integration as well as the undeniable potential of this process to reinforce the overall transatlantic relation, as the two anchors were considered to be complementary.

The third chapter, “The evolution of the economic dimension within the transatlantic relation”, underlined that Post-Cold War transatlantic economic relations (influenced by transformations occurring from the abolition of communist regimes in Europe and the globalization of international economic interactions) have confirmed the significant degree of interdependence and integration between Europe and North America’s market economies.

EU-US economic cooperation has been on an ascendant curve in the post-Cold War era, stimulated by joint initiatives, such as the Transatlantic Declaration (1990), the Transatlantic Business Dialogue, The Joint Action Plan, The New Transatlantic Agenda (1995), The Transatlantic Economic Partnership (1998), The

Bonn Declaration (1999) or The Positive Economic Agenda (2002). EU-US summits represented the institutional framework to discuss economic issues.

The global economic recession and then mutually waged trade wars between the two blocks (and the long-term consequences of the coronavirus pandemic) coupled with each other's rapprochement to China have posed important challenges to the future of transatlantic economic (commercial) relations.

Removal of tariff barriers has been constantly argued for in bilateral trade negotiations. Over the years, the EU continued to stay firm on agriculture and protecting consumers' safety. It was the same case during the overly ambitious TTIP talks (started in July 2013), that didn't reach an agreement, facing many counterarguments from policy-makers and the combative NGO sector, on issues like toxic chemicals exposure, the risk of contamination with genetically modified organisms, stipulations allowing multinational corporations to sue European states, or the lack of transparency during the negotiation process.

The fourth chapter, metaphorically entitled "An energetic transatlantic environment", concluded that, in the wake of global (climate) challenges, transatlantic cooperation on energy and environment is significantly needed in the present, as it has been for decades. The EU and the US account for the two greatest energy consumers at global level and they do share the responsibility to react with a joint approach to constantly growing challenges on energy security. Bilateral agreements and high-level EU-US forums have tried to shape the two partners' strategic directions and impose concrete action plans to address the evolution of climate and sustainable energy trends.

However, approaches diverged when the US withdrew from the "Paris Agreement on Climate Change" and it preferred to act unilaterally, while the EU was promoting the spirit of multilateralism in combating climate threats, accumulating growing ambitions under the umbrella of the European Green Deal, as presented by the von der Leyen Commission. With President Biden in office, things went back on track for the US as it became again a member of the Accord.

Concerning exchanges on the transatlantic energy market, LNG trade has increased in the last period subjected to our research, supported by bilateral political contacts (see Presidents' Jean-Claude Juncker-Donald Trump joint meeting in 2018). Also, cross-border pipeline interconnection projects are seen with mutual satisfaction by Europeans (Romanians included) and Americans, as long as they can act as viable means to provide alternative sources of exploitation and routes for transport and thus to reduce Europe's dependency on the Russian gas supply.

The fifth chapter, "Opportunities and challenges to modern security arrangements: the evolution of transatlantic cooperation for global engagement", explored the evolution of the EU-US security and defense cooperation in the post-Cold War period. Research on this field has shown that the Western European Union continued to represent the EU's defense arm after 1990 and its point of contact with NATO until its institutional architecture and competencies were transferred to the EU.

We have so far observed a gradual ambition of European leaders to develop a European Defense and Security Identity (later denominated Common Foreign and Security Policy-CFSP) - meant to consolidate EU's own military capabilities and the European pillar within NATO -, as well as an EU strategic autonomy, especially on the wave of unpredictability spurred by the Trump Administration.

Nevertheless, NATO remained the most credible international format of transatlantic security and defense cooperation. Its relevance as a defensive political and military organization is a fact in the post-Cold War era, as it had the capacity to identify, frame and adapt to the newly emerging threats of the XXIst century. It can, however, improve its efficiency in the future, by investing more in the credibility of defense, as our research has shown.

The sixth chapter, entitled "Transatlantic cultural relations and higher education exchange programmes. The power of cultural diplomacy", investigated a "soft power" topic, i.e. the particular EU and US approaches and policies for cultural goods and services, as well as their joint commitment to support a transatlantic

community of cultural values and added value through higher education experiences that could further strengthen bilateral ties within the overall EU-US relationship (i.e. the practice of cultural diplomacy).

Generally speaking, cultural stereotypes about Europeans and Americans will continue to exist, but study mobilities are a good opportunity to experience each other's values and to adjust perceptions on both sides. They can help building bridges across cultures in the EU and the US.

Educational and cultural programs, transatlantic cultural diplomacy affairs – as a soft power instrument – can certainly contribute to the strengthening of EU-US bilateral ties, stimulating the appetite for bilateral cooperation in other fields too.

Transatlantic trade in cultural goods should be further stimulated and the artistic and creative industries should be supported more in the future.

The seventh chapter introduces the case study: “Romania - a strategic pillar within the Euro-Atlantic community. Specific benefits and contributions”. From a balanced perspective, it follows both the impact that Romania's adhesion to the Euro-Atlantic institutional structures has had on the country's modernization process and Romania's specific (sectorial) contribution to the development and consolidation of the transatlantic relation as well as its potential to maximize it further.

Romania's integration into the Euro-Atlantic organizations has significantly supported the country's process of modernization in the post-communist period, a process which is still ongoing. It has also brought an important input in bilateral Romania-EU and Romania-US relations. Nevertheless, the impact that Romania can have to influence the overall transatlantic relation remains limited and it can be particularized to specific sectors.

Support can be exercised in the energy field, as Romania is a geostrategic player in the Black Sea region, bearing significant gas resources and a favorable geographic position. Moreover, Romania can be a stronger voice on matters of security and defense, as a both an EU and NATO member, with a pro-European and pro-American attitude and a promoter of Western democratic values.

The country's role as a contributor to NATO-EU complementarity should increase in the future and the B9 dialogue platform is expected to offer enhanced support in this sense.

The eighth chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of data collected as part of the quantitative and qualitative research. It develops on the results of the opinion survey conducted among the Romanian population (309 respondents in total).

According to our survey, most people responded that market economy was the driving principle within the EU-US relation in the post-Cold War period. The EU remains a soft power actor in people's perception, with the potential to become a hard power on the medium term. The majority of the people surveyed appreciated that the EU's internal development has contributed enough to a stronger transatlantic relation. Euro-Atlantic cooperation in the fields of economy and defense were the two main reasons evoked regarding joint transatlantic commitment.

People in Romania considered that EU-US cooperation within NATO is extremely necessary today and agreed that NATO can take further steps to improve its efficiency in attaining political and defensive military goals in the future.

Most people said that Romania has contributed enough to the Alliance's collective efforts but opinions on whether it can be an important voice, capable of influencing the EU-US relation, were split between affirmative and negative, sometimes with very tight scores.

Barack Obama was considered by far the most popular US leader in the EU. There is optimism among the public that transatlantic relations can be revived, if there will be mutual concessions (a trade agreement is concluded) or if the US have another president and if both Europeans and Americans avoid intensifying bilateral contacts with and let themselves (ideologically) influenced by other international actors (possibly China).

The concluding chapter provides formulation of concrete answers to the research questions in the Introduction; it reiterates qualitative and quantitative results in brief, the envisioned scenarios regarding the future of the transatlantic relation, the relevant methodological aspects and it presents proposals for future research in the field.

LIMITATIONS OF THE CURRENT RESEARCH

Although the present thesis aims at providing a comprehensive picture of the diverse EU-US cooperation, through corresponding institutions and mechanisms, it does not discuss the evolution of bilateral relations in the field of technology and communications, which has proven to be of growing interest in the last period.

A good example of transatlantic disruption in this case involves the aforementioned triangle of powers. Washington has repeatedly warned Europe about the underlying effects of accepting China's 5G technological supremacy, stressing that the vision should be much broader and not limited to the opportunity in itself - a price-worthy alternative to competing offerings-, as such move could be a proper way for Beijing to gain influence at global level, considering its overall, growing commercial, technological and military expansion in the last period. But until the U.S. can offer Europeans a viable alternative to Huawei, the challenging Chinese option is likely to remain unchanged.

Moreover, the research does not investigate in detail the American perspective on transatlantic relations, but rather the European approach to this particular, traditional connection and engagement for the good functioning of both societies (to understand here economies, defense industries, cultural progress).

We also acknowledge that the number of interviews is limited and restricted to the category of practitioners and thus it does not include, with the exception of the perspective offered by the Romanian Permanent Representative to the UN, an in-depth empirical analysis of the topic from the perspective of International Relations' theories.

CHAPTER 1.

CONFIGURATION OF THE TRANSATLANTIC RELATION

The first chapter offers a necessary contextualization of the topic related to post-Cold War transatlantic relations from a historic and geopolitical perspective. We present the inception and evolution of the concept of “Western world” or “Western community” and we underline the bilateral dimension of approaching transatlantic relations from both a divergent and an integrated perspective, as we are about to measure throughout the entire research the extent to which the EU and the US have managed to develop as two modern, integrated societies. Also, we present the theories of International Relations that have facilitated the understanding of EU-US interactions at various levels.

The contemporary international system is traversing a period of transition and readjustment, following the major changes in the last decade of the XXth century. Therefore, the current world order displays a mixture of continuity and discontinuity elements in the functioning of the system. We can identify a continuous trend in maintaining the international anarchy and insecurity, perpetuating political, economic, military and resources hierarchies.¹ On the other hand, the change agents are nowadays found in the economic globalization, the strategic competition environment, resurgence of nationalist tendencies, the technological revolution, erosion of the sovereignty concept.²

Stanley Hoffman argued that recognizing and understanding this innovative international system emerging on the horizon would actually mean analyzing the fundamental units of the system, the major foreign policy objectives of these units and the very particular interactions between them, mutually reinforcing each other by means of military and economic capabilities.³

From these premises, the metamorphosis can be easily depicted by actors involved in the international, networked system. Traditional pillars (nation-states) are being challenged on the international arena by transgovernmental actors (multinational corporations, terrorist groups), intergovernmental actors (international organizations-NAFTA, ASEAN, APEC, and WTO), nongovernmental actors, supragovernmental actors (UN, EU) or even stateless nations (the Kurds, the Basques). Competing for international supremacy nowadays means achieving economic and technological advantage and not necessarily territorial gains, even though we have witnessed a number of attempts in this sense too in the last decade (see Russia’s annexation of Crimea, for example, or the more recent war in Ukraine that began with the Russian invasion on February 24, 2022).⁴

Interestingly enough, the contemporary international relations are marked by a curious ambivalence, nevertheless possible, as time has shown us, where peace, stability and cohesion trends intertwine with fragmentation and instability and thus the two dichotomist dimensions, bearing integrative and disintegrative forces, define a somehow chaotic globalized world.⁵

In its primary form, the Western world as a strategic concept was born out of the alliance between the US and Western Europe. Firstly, the US intervention in WWI established Washington as a power in Europe. Afterwards, the trend has shifted mostly towards disengagement during the inter-war period, and it was only disrupted by the US entry WWII as an Allies’ side.

Codenamed “Operation Neptune”, the battle for Normandy in D-Day (June 6, 1944) as part of the famous “Operation Overlord” led by the Allied forces during World War II has opened the path to the

¹ Charles W. Kegley Jr., Eugene R. Wittkopf, *World Politics. Trend and transformation*, New York: St Martin’s Press, 1995, p. 6.

² K. J. Holsti, *International Politics: A Framework for Analysis*, Prentice Hall, New Jersey, 1997, pp. 75-78.

³ Stanley Hoffman, “Viitorul sistemului politic internațional”, in Stanley Hoffman, *Ianus și Minerva. Eseuri asupra teoriei și practicii politice*, Chișinău: Știința, 1999, pp. 112-117.

⁴ Ana-Maria Stoian, *Relațiile SUA-UE la începutul secolului XXI: noile raporturi transatlantice*, Iași: Lumen, 2006, p.22.

⁵ Dean A. Minix, Sandra M. Hawley, *Global Politics*, Wadsworth, Belmont, 1998, p. 4.

American military influence on the European continent (to prevent the expansion of the Soviet Union), that still continues today. The establishing of NATO in 1949 as based on the Truman Doctrine of Containment (June 1947), together with the Marshall Plan of post-war economic reconstruction of a democratic Europe was in fact a continuation of Halford Mackinder's old geopolitical theory (1904), according to which the US as maritime power had the mission to secure part of the "European peninsula", in order to prevent the Soviet control over the entire Eurasia.

Transatlantic political and military relations were initially officialized under the Vandenberg Resolution, Republican-led (1948), the Brussels Treaty (1948) and the North Atlantic Treaty (1949).

Still, the enthusiasm to engage deeper in the geopolitical game of that time was not so powerful as to determine leaders in Washington not to calculate the strategic disadvantage of risking a new World War, had they preferred an open confrontation and not respected the agreement with the USSR, an agreement that clearly defined the spheres of influence as part of Europe ended up divided between the two main poles of power.

The US was preparing for a long-lasting (historically unprecedented, arms race of the) Cold War, officially starting in June 1947, after the launching of the "European Recovery Program" by the American Secretary of State George Marshall and, especially, after the USSR leader Josef Stalin rejected this assistance proposal, in the name of the whole communist bloc controlled by Moscow. He instead decided in 1949 the establishment of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon or CMEA) to counterbalance the American initiative. The further US approach towards Eastern Europe will have implied a position of political adversity combined with a passive acceptance of the realities.

Generally speaking, during the Cold War, the American engagement on the old continent had known the same logic on both sides of the Atlantic. Put differently, we speak about the territorial defense against the expansion of totalitarian regimes and the assurance that Germany will not rise again as to challenge the European order. These were as powerful as the new admiration for American values and principles and they actually came in a combined formula. The European Union (formerly the European Community) integration project has known visible Anglo-American influences, these laying at its very foundation.

As the security issues mainly relied on NATO's capacity of strategy and intervention following the collapse of the European Defence Community (EDC)-when France rejected the Treaty of Paris on 30 August 1954, a treaty initiated by the Pleven Plan-, with the well-known guarantee stipulated in the Article 5 of North Atlantic Treaty, Europe has slowly found the way to build its community on the remaining social and economic pillars, while at the same time maintaining its political and diplomatic independence.

It can be argued that Europeans were accustomed to the US having the first say, with them lining up for or against this position (sometimes attempting to influence it) – this attitude in International Relations was denominated by Harlan Cleveland "*Après vous, Alphonse*", after the catchphrase popularized by Frederick Burr Opper's comic strip *Alphonse et Gaston*, describing people being overly courteous to each other, thus inviting themselves reciprocally to start something over, and refusing to act until the other party acts first.

Unlike the USSR, the American model did not favorised European states as satellites but instead it promoted the cooperative dimension, to attract them as allies. *The Empire of Evil* and *the Empire by invitation* (as the Norwegian historian Geir Lundestad framed it; Europeans invited US to stay, initially, for postwar economic assistance, then for political support and security warranties, and eventually, a strong US military deployment) were visibly two competitive and strongly opposed models of coagulating forces around or under the leadership of a world superpower.

Institutional projects such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have also validated the virtues of US leadership within the transatlantic bilateral relation.

About the famous Marshall Plan, the then State Secretary George Frost Kennan valued its necessity for two reasons, "so that they can buy from us"⁶, and "so that they will have enough self-confidence to

⁶ Memorandum prepared by the Policy Planning Staff. FRUS 1947, 21 July 1947, III: 335c.

withstand outside pressures”.⁷ Harvard Professor Stanley Hoffmann added to this a direct opinion on America’s interests beyond embracing the protective role towards its European partners: “We have had, over the years, the Atlantic design, first with the Marshall Plan, NATO, the early steps toward the integration of the West Europeans into an entity bound to the United States, later under the name of the Atlantic partnership, used both to bless the development of that entity and to stress its true destination: playing its part in America’s orchestra”.⁸

There were, however, disagreements and disputes between Europeans and Americans, as the relation was not necessarily perfect, even though it was the best option for both interested parties. Issues ranged from the Korean War, the collapse of the EDC, the appropriate level of military contributions, the security arrangements at global level, but also economic policies towards the Soviet Union, managing the dollar’s global role and the world economic system. The stance of the EEC/EC countries sometimes succeeded in attracting the US into negotiations.

Following the Suez Crisis (October 29-November 7, 1956), a moment when the transatlantic bargain found itself in the need to be renegotiated, political scientists began to discuss the *primacy* concept within the transatlantic security relation: the European states accepting the American leadership of the West, whereas the US would listen to and consider European concerns. Political scientist Stanley Sloan called it a “defence dependence culture”.

During the 1960s, the US sought a greater European contribution to the burden sharing for securing Western defense. The trend continued in the following years, with a key issue of compensating American costs of stationing troops in Europe. US diplomat Henry Kissinger criticized the trend in Euro-Atlantic bilateral relations, lacking the “integrating all-over framework”⁹ and determining “American unilateralism”¹⁰ because of “European “irresponsibility”¹¹.

The so-called “transatlantic bargain” under President Ronald Reagan revealed the American primacy, as in the words of Vice President George Bush: “We’ve heard a lot of protests from our European allies. I’m sorry. The US is the leader of the free world, and under this Administration we are beginning once again to act like it”.¹²

“America first” policies were received with disillusion in Europe (which is the same case today). The European Political Cooperation (EPC) launched by the European Community was partly a consequence of renegotiating the transatlantic relation during Nixon Administration, one of the first actions following the failure of EDC and preceding the Maastricht Treaty and the establishment of European CFSP. However, EPC foreign and security policies were largely declaratory.

The unpredicted fall of the Berlin Wall (November 9, 1989) has triggered an irreversible orientation in Eastern Europe and thus proclaiming the termination of the Cold War. From Warsaw to Bucharest, by June until December, the communist dictators will have been ousted, one by one. It is nevertheless true that social and political resistance to the perspectives of change and reform were different.

Consequently, the treatment was not uniformly applied to all the communist regimes across the continent (Berlin, Prague, Warsaw, Sofia, and Bucharest). The most radical political cleansing and implementation of the lustration law can be found in the former GDR (facilitated by the unification process and the Western-Germany policies) and in the former Czechoslovakia, under the influential personality of President Vaclav Havel. In these two countries, there were reported the most numerous denunciations of ex-

⁷ *Ibidem*

⁸ Stanley Hoffmann, “No trumps, No luck, No will” in Chace, J. and Ravenal, E. C., 1976, *Atlantis Lost – US-European Relations after the Cold War*. New York, Council on Foreign Relations: 1–2.

⁹ J. Joffe, (1983). “Europe and America: The Politics of Resentment (cont’d)”, in *Foreign Affairs* 61 (Spring), pp. 575–576.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*

¹¹ *Ibidem*

¹² *Ibidem*

secret service agents operating for the communists, and the most ambitious lustration operations involving former leaders and members of the old regime's nomenclature.

Though supported and proposed by the civil society from the 1990s ongoing, the law of lustration was never actually on any Romanian government or parliamentary majority's official agenda. However, there were several trials and sentences of some of the Ceaușescu's family members and of a number of important figures in the Communist regime and a legal base for uncovering officers and collaborators of the Romanian secret services.

Though in the absence of any absolute recipe for reform, with natural differences among them, European states engaged themselves into a lasting transformation process that, to a certain extent, still continues today in variable degrees over the region. This process implied four distinct dimensions that characterize the concept of transition:

- Liberalization;
- Democratization;
- Occidentalization/Europeanization;
- Integration.

These essential dimensions have sometimes developed together, at the same pace, at some other time they evolved successively, in different tandems (liberalization-democratization; integration-Europeanization), they intertwined with one another.

Neoliberalism and John Williamson's 10 principles of free-market economic policies known as the Washington Consensus (1989) formed the basic doctrine inspiring reforms and socio-economic progress in post-communist countries, especially in the first decade of transition.

Some states have learned and applied the neoliberal principles more quickly and courageously ("the shock therapy" or the Balcerowicz Plan in Poland, the reforms in the Czech Republic etc.) while others, i.e. Romania or Bulgaria, have experienced a slower pace of the liberal transition, which was a factor that contributed to the different political and economic performance in the countries beyond the Iron Curtain. Additionally, the first subcategories of states in the region was beginning to take shape then, something that has also influenced the future distinct starting points in the European and Euro-Atlantic integration race.

In the mid-1990s, the strategic option of ex-communist European states was clearly defined, in terms of their accession to Occidental structures. Politically speaking, pro-Western parties will have dominated the political spectrum of the transition period, imposing the clear pro-EU and pro-NATO orientation of European states. For as long as the following two decades, foreign policy approach continued to represent one of the few (if not the single) consensual objectives of these transition societies.

The West (considered here as geopolitical and geostrategic entity) was then preparing to encompass the East and the Copenhagen criteria (1993)-political, economic and institutional-administrative-offered the first clear, structured presentation of the potential openness of the EU towards its enlargement policy after the fall of the Iron Curtain but also a reasonable filter for decision-makers in Brussels in assessing the performance of the new post-communist democracies in Europe.

1989 represented by far a highly significant year in Europe's history. A new world was being born on the communist ruins. The post-communist transition was nevertheless a long, tough, complex, socially expensive process. East-Europeans discovered that democracy and market economy come at a cost, bearing not only freedoms and benefits. The Western aid was neither endless, nor financially overwhelming, nor altruistic and unconditioned.

Internal problems in ex-communist countries represented another weak point hampering and limiting the smoothness of the transition process (in its first two decades), either we include here political decisions that slowed down reforms or stopped them temporarily (for electoral purpose or other reasons), or if we consider corruption scandals in many of the countries in the region, the restructuring of national economy (industries) that generated millions of unemployed people in East-Central Europe, other problematic reforms

in various fields (health, education, justice, public administration etc.) or attempts to control the media instruments by political means.

Despite the undeniable economic growth of the 2000s, the means of modern technology, infrastructure and communication processes, along with a number of major foreign investments, the third post-communist decade brought about certain political and ideological sensitivities on the continent, that gradually became more and more serious and concerning for the Western partners, as the neo-liberal, pro-European enthusiastic trend of the '90s will have been replaced or, at least, weakened by a conservative, protectionist, Eurosceptic and nationalist wave at the decision-making level in various countries.

The Great Powers rediscovered gradually post-1990 Central and Eastern Europe, into a new strategic, political and economic paradigm, entailing a completely different reasoning, at governmental, institutional, societal and economic level. The Cold War schemes were not functioning anymore, new stakes, challenges and opportunities for collaboration invaded the scene in world politics. The road was slowly opening to reshaping spheres of influence, most like fifty years ago, prior to the totalitarian, ideological far-right and far-left delimitation of political regimes in Europe. Therefore, modern, more pragmatic instruments and tailor-made approaches for each state became an imperative of the post-Cold War era in international relations.

Nonetheless, it is a fact that the US was rejoicing a great image capital, superior to any other Western power, a trend dating before 1989, as the American Dream and the US soft power have fascinated many in Europe, especially the young people, despite the severe control of the communist secret services and the regime propaganda¹³.

After the disintegration (implosion) of the USSR and the Paris Agreement on Conventional Forces (November 19, 1990) having put an end to the bipolar world, academic debates on the evolution and completion of the transition period were visibly marked by supporters of one of the two distinct features of hegemony, i.e. unipolar versus multipolar. Of course, supporters of the unipolar world placed the United States at the forefront of the global race, striving to achieve its political, military and economic supremacy while installing what is called a *Pax Americana*. The other group advocating for an international system with multiple poles of power (US, EU, Russia, China, Japan, India) would have rather supported the persistence of the balance of power spirit.

A balanced vision in terms of power configuration is offered by scholar Joseph S. Nye, who argues in favor of an interdependent, multi-level framework. In other words, on military grounds, the United States holds the lead in a unipolar model, then, economically speaking, we face a rather tripolar system, defined by the three pillars-the US, the EU and China on the rise, while in terms of transnational interdependence, there is a diffusion of power favoring transnational companies.¹⁴

Undeniably true, the evolution of the international system has taken a toll on the positioning of the two major actors defining the actual geopolitical and geo-economic context, the EU and the USA. Therefore, contemporary transatlantic relations are both a result and a determinant of global changes. Generally speaking, shifting between isolationism and interventionism, the United States has interpreted the lack of major competitors after the dissolution of the USSR as a need to gain momentum in defining a new liberal order, on democratic and free trade grounds, infusing (or imposing) the rules of conduct for individual states and the functioning of the international system. But, as diplomat Henry Kissinger has genuinely remarked, the United States are not in the position to dominate the current world order by themselves, which is why it was often interested in finding reasonable partners to cooperate with.¹⁵

¹³ Valentin Naumescu, *Politica Marilor Puteri în Europa Centrală și de Est-30 de ani de la sfârșitul Războiului Rece*, Bucharest: Humanitas, 2019, pp. 36-41, 47-49, 61-63.

¹⁴ Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Understanding International Conflicts. An Introduction to Theory and History*, New York: Longman, 1997, p. 190.

¹⁵ Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, Bucharest: All, 1998, p. 17.

In “America, the EU and Strategic Culture: Renegotiating the transatlantic bargain”, Asle Toje considers the transatlantic relation largely based on historical facts, and changes operated to the so-called connection were not always obvious or voiced out before they shaped a new status quo.

While the ambitious European integration projects practically relies on economy and identity dimensions, the transatlantic partnership mainly involves cooperation on strategy and security matters, with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as the main institutional actor linking the two blocs, the author argues. It is also true that, throughout time, initiatives of economic, energy or academic cooperation came to the surface between the two as well.

The Transatlantic Trade and Investment partnership will be subject to a particular assessment, as it was labeled “obsolete” and, consequently abandoned, with no chances to be renewed at all, under the new administration in Washington, led by President Donald Trump. This is because the counterparts have engaged in several rounds of negotiations (not finalized) on a completely different agreement, more limited, restricted to industrial goods and excluding agriculture, one of the most ardent matters of controversy during previous talks on TTIP.

Discussing the transatlantic partnership as a *bargain* takes us back to the definition given by US diplomat Harlan Cleveland, the former US Ambassador to NATO, who coined this term (“transatlantic bargain”), arguing that “The glue that held the allies more or less together is a large, complex and dynamic bargain – partly an understanding among the Europeans, but mostly a deal between them and the United States of America.”¹⁶ He further envisioned the core of this bargain as “a strong presumption of cooperation in the event of trouble – or in the event of negotiations that affect all the members”.¹⁷

Originally, this bargain meant the United States would strive to defend Europe and contribute to the reconstruction of economy in this region, requiring that Europeans jointly support these efforts and make efficient use of the American assistance. Additionally, the inner implications of such a transatlantic agreement assumed that Europeans would not visibly challenge US foreign policy, whereas the US would sustain and not subvert European integration.

The American author and economist Gottfried Haberler observed in 1949 that: “The idea of a European political and economic union is taken more seriously in the United States than in Europe”.¹⁸ Put differently, the creation of the United States of Europe employing a federalist pattern of development was enthusiastically supported by Americans. Nonetheless, we will see that the post-1990 desirably accelerated EU’s internal development was an ambition and a fact that the US had to accept as a reality.

In the study entitled “Eisenhower, Kennedy and the United States of Europe”, Pascaline Winand noted that “European energies should be concentrated on building a European political community solidly rooted in economic integration. This would give Europe greater influence in world councils and reduce the attraction of nationalism. Western Europe would therefore become the economic and political equal of the United States. Second, the potential of the European co-equal should be harnessed to that of the United States for two common enterprises – world economic development and military defence”.¹⁹

The US engagement had also contributed to the intra-European bargain, thus preventing any of the continental powers to gain primacy in the fight for achieving what is commonly denominated in International Relations “the balance of power”. It helped guaranteeing the sovereignty of many small states, enabling them to open towards binding cooperation with more powerful states.

In the first years after 1989, the transatlantic bargain has displayed a certain trend of stability, the US continued to involve in European security matters, while on the other hand waiting for their commitment to collective defense and a stable environment within the intergovernmental construction.

¹⁶ Harlan Cleveland, *NATO: The Transatlantic Bargain*. New York, Harper & Row: 3–9, 1970.

¹⁷ Cleveland, *op.cit.*, p. 12.

¹⁸ Gottfried Haberler, “Economic Aspects of a European Union”, in *World Politics*, Vol.1, No.4, July 1949, pp.431–441.

¹⁹ Pascaline Winand, *Eisenhower, Kennedy and the United States of Europe*. New York, St Martin’s Press, 1993, p.5.

The Transatlantic Declaration on EC–US Relations, dating from 1990, has put into a long-term perspective the traditional partnership, acknowledging that Euro-Atlantic solidarity is the key to ensure durable peace and liberty, to create free markets and to rebuild a post-war divided continent.

The Declaration stipulates as principles of conduct consultations on aspects of mutual interest, both politically and economically speaking, with the aim of aligning their positions, without being prejudicial to each actor's independence. Within international organizations, Europe and North America pledge to adopt a cooperative attitude.

In addition to this, they both pledged to respect and to apply the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance principles, to consolidate the new, unified and democratic Europe, to intensify economic, security and human rights cooperation, bearing in mind from the very beginning that challenges, as well as benefits of a fruitful cooperation are, in fact, global, the effect is propelled to a greater extent, beyond the progress of the two societies and economies directly involved in the mission.

On matters of economy, the US and the ex-European Community, aware of the imperative to consolidate multilateral commerce, jointly supported implementing GATT and OECD provisions regarding investments and trade in products and services. In addition, as stipulated in the Declaration, bilateral dialogue will have addressed non-tariff barriers for industrial and agriculture trade as well as for services, competition policy, transport, telecommunications and many other aspects.

Intensifying cooperation meant to include, of course, the scientific, technological, education and cultural fields among the relevant others, enabling the initiation of research projects, academic and youth exchanges.

As the former USSR no longer represented a (common) threat in international relations, debates about a possible American disengagement from Europe began to flourish. At the 1991 Summit organized in Rome, President George Bush remarked that: “our premise is that the American role in the defense and affairs of Europe will not be made superfluous by European unity. If our premise is wrong, if, my friends, your ultimate aim is to provide independently for your own defense, the time to tell us is today”²⁰.

Even though the US saluted European efforts to become more responsible over issues concerning peace-keeping, they were at the same time questioning whether there is the possibility for the EU to develop as an autonomous construction, contradictory (not complementary!) to NATO's leadership and American strategic interests in general.

After 1992, the new political generation infused with a shift of perspective on transatlantic relations. A new element was distinguished in the form of an enhanced role of the EU's initiative combined with a decreasing American influence.

However, Americans did not completely disengage from their continental partner, but they have rather tried to come up with a renewed agenda of the “transatlantic bargain” (The New Transatlantic Agenda). In other words, this basically meant raising up the standard of the old partnership to a global dimension, changing the consultation framework with common actions as follows: advocating for global peace, stability, democracy and development; Reacting to global challenges; Expanding global commerce and fostering tighter economic relations.²¹

A sense of uncertainty and concern was felt in Europe about the US' degree of commitment to its security, alongside with other points of disagreement like the International Criminal Court (ICC), the United Nations, the Kyoto Protocol, the crisis in Kosovo and EU versus NATO stages of enlargement. The American partner seemed to play by the rule “multilateral when possible, unilateral when necessary”.²²

²⁰ “Bush Hits the Wrong Note in Rome”, *Chicago Tribune*, 10 November.

²¹ *The New Transatlantic Agenda* – EU/US Summit, Madrid, 3 December 1995. The declaration is available on the EU Commission website.

²² Asle Toje, *America, the EU and Strategic Culture: Renegotiating the transatlantic bargain*, Routledge, 2008, p. 34. Online available at: <https://epdf.pub/america-the-eu-and-strategic-culture-transatlantic-security-relations-after-the-.html>.

Connections evolved somehow promisingly, though from the mid-1990s the Allies faced disagreements over burden and power-sharing, both willing to maintain one and decrease the other.

The number of troops stationing in Europe started to decrease from around 320 000 in the 1990s to almost 50 000 in 2004 and the trend continued afterwards, marking a gradual disengagement in Europe; while at the same time maintain the call for the EU to contribute to US policy goals. There were also discussions about NATO's need to reform itself for better coordination mechanisms (and we believe the discussion is valid today, too, with new global challenges arising). The Iraqi war (2003) was deemed by some scholars (Toje) to be the most serious conflictual point within the transatlantic relation for years.

In the US official political message, the EU later in 2010 re-emerged as the strongest partner in advancing global security and prosperity. The foreign policy challenge for the Americans at that time was the imperative for a new common transatlantic agenda, inspired by a rather cooperative approach, and not by dominant requirements stemming from Washington.

Reaching towards the end of the second half in the 2010 decade, the Euro-Atlantic bond was understood in a different paradigm. America's grasp for isolationism and primacy has given Europeans justified concerns about mutual transatlantic engagement in the future and a new impetus to boost European integration as to cover enhanced defense and security capabilities.

Nowadays, it is quite common to frame transatlantic relations from both an integrative and a dividing perspective. Some authors discuss the concept of "transatlantic community" as having surpassed the rather symbolic "need of the moment" determining the two actors to intertwine courageously in order to face significant ideological (fascist, communist), economic or military constraints by forging a strong cross-border alliance.

We should understand the transatlantic liaison in a different paradigm, they say, as Europe has developed in its own particular manner, after its post-war economic reconstruction, and the two continents' perspective on their mission and identity in the international system is being understood distinctively by Europeans and Americans.

In other words, this sounded more like a pledge for a two-world scenario. In "Romania transatlantică", the issue of legitimacy was evoked, a concept once born out of the slogans of freedoms and liberal democracy on the two sides of the Atlantic and now challenged by different perspectives in Europe and the US (see NATO intervention in Iraq) in terms of international law, state sovereignty, moral and power in international relations. It was suggested that legitimacy of intervention within the US-EU strategic cooperation should be one major point to approach the current debate on transatlantic issues at the beginning of the XXIst century²³.

As topics in multilateral trade negotiations evolved from products and services to international economic regulations, policies in the EU and the US have diverged to a certain degree, for instance on environmental, social and cultural patterns. Nevertheless, besides assuming a "divorce" of this kind, the two authors are confident in affirming that both Western societies have rather converged as a result of economic integration and the process of globalization²⁴.

Melania-Gabriela Ciot, in "Idiosyncrasies and Interculturalism in Foreign Policy Decision- Making", referred in her book to the findings of Cécile Denis, Kieran McMorrow and Werner Röger who have argued that the trend of globalization was really beneficial for the European Union and this will remain a constant characteristic, enabling member states to converge towards American standards, even if we can detect at some point the costs of this transition.²⁵

²³ George Cristian Maior, "Europa și America: o alianță indispensabilă, dar deloc facilă", in Vasile Iuga, Mihaela Nicola, Răsvan Radu (coord.), *România transatlantică*, Bucharest, 2016, pp. 33-34.

²⁴ Laurent Cohen-Tanugi, "The Atlantic Divide in Historical Perspective A View from Europe", in Jeffrey Kopstein and Sven Steinmo (eds.), *Growing Apart? America and Europe in the Twenty-First Century*, Cambridge: CUP, 2008, pp. 217, 220.

²⁵ Cécile Denis, Kieran Mc Morrow and Werner Röger, Globalisation: Trends, Issues and Macro Implications for the EU, EU Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, in *Economic Papers*, N° 254, 2006, p. 9,

An integrative perspective of transatlantic relations was facilitated by accessing multiple theories applied in the sphere of international studies. Therefore, the theory that worked best for our endeavor was the Pragmatist Social Theory which goes beyond the state-centric approach and emphasises more on the input of non-state actors in the evolution of transatlantic cooperation and the integration of the transatlantic relations as based on the actors' rooted beliefs. A relevant example in this sense can be traced in the chapter covering Romania's input to the Euro-Atlantic relation, as we present companies in the sector of energy cooperation.

Considering the pragmatist assumptions as social theory, beliefs of various sub-governmental, intra-governmental, and inter-governmental actors – layers popularised as such by Waltz²⁶, – become the rules on which their actions are based. Analyzing the beliefs of different transatlantic actors facilitates a holistic approach on transatlanticism, global governance, and world order. As the pragmatist social theory goes, actors are socially embedded, unveiling the potential for creative action in adapting behavioural patterns.²⁷

In a tripartite representation of transatlantic actors, each category of agents perceives its contribution to the international order.²⁸ Self-referential speeches or regularly issued documents by non-state actors are an expression of the holistic vision, of the underlying beliefs.²⁹ Speaking at the 2022 Munich Security Conference (18–20 February 2022), NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, declared that “standing together in NATO, Europe and America will keep the peace and protect our democratic way of life”³⁰. Gina M. Raimondo, the US Secretary of Commerce, affirmed in December 2021 that “as we navigate this rapidly changing digital world, we need each other more than ever. We are allies with a core commitment to competitive, open economies”³¹. Such declarations also express the liberal vision over the transatlantic partnership. Another example, the European-American Cultural Foundation (created in 2013) acts as a non-profit organization aiming to strengthen cultural ties between the EU and its Member States and the US, as they invoke the “profound historical relationship and affinity” between Europeans and Americans.³²

Other theories considered were the liberal theory and the transnational governance theory. Liberalism is manifesting in the system of shared democratic values and the institutions functioning in the Euro-Atlantic space, and NATO is just one of these examples.³³

In sum, the transatlantic relation is very dynamic, like in a graphic representation with up and down tendencies. After the Cold War, the EU and the US have developed an increased preoccupation for joint transatlantic engagement, for various common and individual interests, entailing a both bilateral and global impact in a post-classical warfare international society, nevertheless exploiting new means of hybrid confrontation, resulting in a number of interdependent challenges.

https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/pages/publication668_en.pdf, accessed May 13, 2020. See Melania-Gabriela Ciot, *Idiosyncracies and Interculturalism in Foreign Policy Decision-Making*, Romanian Academy. Center for Transylvanian Studies, 2015.

²⁶ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State and War. A Theoretical Analysis*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1959.

²⁷ Hans Joas, *The Creativity of Action*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

²⁸ Ulrich Roos, “Beliefs and Loyalties in World Politics: A Pragmatist Framework for Analysis” in *Theorizing Foreign Policy in a Globalised World*, edited by Gunther Hellmann, and Knud Eri Jørgensen, Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, pp. 176–198.

²⁹ Ulrich Franke and Matthias Hofferberth, “From Transatlantic Relations to World Order: Reconstructing Beliefs as Rules for Action”, paper presented at the ISA Annual Convention, 2021, virtual platform, http://colfa.utsa.edu/poliscigeography/docs/Franke_Hofferberth_ISA_2021_final.pdf, accessed April 6, 2021.

³⁰ Remarks by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the Munich Security Conference session “Hand in hand: Transatlantic and European Security”, Feb. 19, 2022, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_192204.htm, accessed August 30, 2022.

³¹ US Chamber of Commerce, “Transatlantic Relations: How the U.S. and EU Can Navigate a Rapidly-Changing World”, 2021, <https://www.uschamber.com/on-demand/government-policy/transatlantic-relations-how-the-u-s-and-eu-can-navigate-a-rapidly-changing-world>, accessed August 30, 2021.

³² The European-American Cultural Foundation, *Our Mission*, http://e-acf.org/our_mission/, accessed July 11, 2020.

³³ see also Melania-Gabriela Ciot and Iulia-Anamaria Ghidui, “The influence of European and American non-state actors on the integration of the transatlantic market after the Cold War - A Romanian perspective”, in *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 2022.

CHAPTER 2. POWER POLITICS, SYMBOLIC VALUES AND IDEOLOGIES IN THE TRANSATLANTIC COMMUNITY

In this chapter we present the evolution of the EU's official political discourse on the value of transatlantic engagement corroborated with an increased support for a stronger and more assertive Europe.

The cultural-ideological dichotomy between multilateralism and unilateralism in international relations, as advocated by the EU and the US, respectively, has offered the scientific community a strong, argument-based position on the divergent nature of the Euro-Atlantic relationship. Promoter of the intrinsic values of its member nations and aiming to counterbalance the US' hegemonic military power, the EU's multilateralist approach designed the framework for a secular, institutionalized, "soft power" governance model to be perpetuated by countries all over the world, as part of a collaborative task in the wake of diverse global challenges. However, Europe's "cherry-picking" multilateralism is a threat to multilateralism itself, as Pollack suggested, raising the issue of the EU's intervention in Kosovo without a UNSC approval or the subsidies part of the Union's Common Agricultural Policy¹.

Supporters of a messianic mission, with deeply-rooted, religious and symbolist elements of identity mythology, US policy-makers have justified many of their external actions as morally entitled interventions. These originated and were uphold by the set of traditional American values that shaped the American nation politically, values which the leaders intended to export further, at international level.

Despite divergent tendencies in European and American foreign policy principles, the two powers share significant political and ideological values, strong enough to uphold a long-term commitment in reshaping the world order in a post-Cold War reality. Consolidated in its aftermath, democracy, freedom, the rule of law and other specific values were all frequently invoked in political discourses as elements in the legacy of the West.

Implying the preeminence of Lundestad's US hegemonic "empire by invitation"², Romero notes that "an American Century is literally inconceivable if we do not weigh in the other aspects and actors of international life that gave shape to it. There is no American Century without the century of Germany, of Europe's self-destruction, of Soviet Communism, of postcolonial liberation and re-organization, of the rise of East Asia, and so on"³.

Although in a continuous process to define a unique identity on different dimensions (political, cultural), and attempting to challenge the "American Century" (i.e. the twentieth century)⁴ legacy, growing ambitions of the European construction will have entered the American focus, determining a new paradigm of the transatlantic partnership, where the EU became a valuable negotiating actor.

2.1. "EMERGING EUROPE"

The last decade of the 1990s cast light on the "emerging Europe" potential and made the Americans adopt a new strategy towards their continental allies on various political (and military) issues. The prospect of German reunification received different reactions on the two sides of the Atlantic. Discussions with the occasion of a special EC summit in December 1989 raised concerns over Germany possibly hindering the European project, or even worse, taking the lead over Europe once again. By contrast, the US leader George

¹ Mark A. Pollack, "Unilateral America, multilateral Europe", in John Peterson, Mark A. Pollack (eds.), *Europe, America and Bush. Transatlantic Relations after 2000*, New York: Routledge, 2003, p. 127.

² Geir Lundestad, *The United States and Western Europe Since 1945: From "Empire" by Invitation to Transatlantic Drift*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

³ Federico Romero, "Democracy and Power: The Interactive Nature of the American Century", in R. Laurence Moore, Maurizio Vaudagna, *The American Century in Europe*, Cornell University Press, 2018, p.60.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 48.

Herbert Walker Bush hailed the progress in Eastern Europe and he didn't perceive such a threat in a reunited Germany; unification of their own country should be the issue of German people, in the end.

As Chancellor Helmut Kohl, in his allocution to the Bundestag on November 28, 1989, in claimed "the future architecture of Germany must be fitted into the future architecture of Europe as a whole"⁵. An upgraded version of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) was "part of the core of the pan-European architecture"⁶ together with a strengthened European Community, "reaching out with openness and flexibility to the reform-oriented states of Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe"⁷. While the US seemed to endorse the CSCE initiative, they nevertheless warned it could not replace NATO. The Charter of Paris for a New Europe (November 1990) paved the route to permanentize the CSCE, with new responsibilities: supervising elections, preventing disputes, and crisis management.

As challenging as it was for corresponding policies in the US to keep pace, the EC development (culminating in the Maastricht Treaty of 1993, introducing the European Union) could not be stopped and, finally, the EC's coordination of Western aid to Eastern countries was consented to on the American side.

US Secretary of State James Baker appeal to a "New Atlanticism", "to keep pace with European integration and institutional reform"⁸ will have been later supported by the European Commission President Jacques Delors and Irish Prime Minister Charles Haughey, (Ireland was holding then the rotative Presidency of the Council of Ministers), as the US and EC signed the "Transatlantic Declaration on EC-US Relations" in November 1990, thus offering the Americans a say in Europe's envisioned multilateral framework of negotiation and the possibility of EC-US policy coordination. American commercial interests also remained at stake and suspected a fertile ground in this collaborative format.

Commented upon its rather abstract description of the patterns of transatlantic behavior, the document "did mark a new maturity (...) as well as incipient institutionalization (n.n. of relations) by prescribing regular high-level meetings. The idea of the transatlantic community, it now seemed to some Americans as well as Europeans, could replace the alliance-thinking as the dominant mode of US-European cooperation"⁹.

In his address to the Royal Institute of International Affairs (1992), President Jacques Delors underlined the pros and cons of the globalization process and the self-evident new world order, to which the EC must respond wisely, in close cooperation with other powerful actors (the US, Japan): "I do not doubt that the Community will thus be contributing to a more stable and more equitable world order, as is testified by the declarations which the Community signed jointly with the United States in 1990 and with Japan in 1991"¹⁰.

The principled European model of regional integration and development is depicted as a source of inspiration even for Americans: "unlike the attempts at regional autarky in the 1930s, the European Community has shown for a long time that it is a factor for growth in international trade and its increasing liberalization. Our trading partners are gradually being won over to the idea that regional integration has a dynamic impact on all, and the European model is an inspiration for others - witness the recent agreements concluded by the

⁵ Helmut Kohl, *Ten Point Program for Overcoming the Division of Germany and Europe*, November 28, 1989, http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=223, accessed May 13, 2020.

⁶ *Ibidem*

⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁸ James A. Baker, "Upheaval in the East; Excerpts From Baker's Speech on Berlin and U.S. Role in Europe's Future", in *The New York Times*, 13 December, 1989, <https://www.nytimes.com/1989/12/13/world/upheaval-east-excerpts-baker-s-speech-berlin-us-role-europe-s-future.html>, accessed May 13, 2020.

⁹ Alan K. Henrikson, *Atlantic Diplomacy Transformed: from the Transatlantic Declaration (1990) to the New Transatlantic Agenda (1995)*, Seattle, Washington, 1997, p.3, http://aei.pitt.edu/2613/1/002814_1.PDF, accessed May 13, 2020.

¹⁰ *ADDRESS BY PRESIDENT JACQUES DELORS TO THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS: THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AND THE NEW WORLD ORDER*, London, September 7, 1992, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_92_81, accessed May 14, 2020.

United States, Canada and Mexico”¹¹ (NAFTA, signed on December 17, 1992). ”The European Community can offer an example”¹².

Backing the multilateralist (institutionalist) approach, President Delors stressed the importance of the political factor in accelerating the economic integration engine of the Community and the world beyond its borders: “I would add - and I will not go into detail - that economic integration, unless it is backed by a strong political will, will not in itself produce stronger international institutions or help create world government”¹³.

At a very little distance, on September 22, 1992, Delors reiterated this idea, in his “Lecture on Europe and its meaning for America”: “as Jean Monnet, one of its founding fathers said from the beginning, the European Community’s ambition is above all political. (...) It is commonly referred to as the << political will >> and it enables us to overcome obstacles and transcend difficulties”¹⁴. The Single European Act (1987) restated the political dimension of European integration: It read: “the European Communities and European political cooperation shall have as their objective to contribute together to making concrete progress towards European unity”¹⁵. In Delors’ words, “economic and monetary integration will remain elusive and incomplete unless there is also progress on the institutional and democratic fronts”¹⁶.

From the European perspective, such developments would enhance the quality of the US’ relationship with the continent, under the auspices of the common values they share: “the United States can therefore expect the renewed vigor in our integration process to add new dimensions to its relationship with the community. We are linked across the Atlantic by common values and ideals and by a shared attachment to peace, fundamental freedoms and democracy”¹⁷.

Assuming the flaws in the communist experience, as well as the unpredictable consequences in the winds of change, the liberal ideology promoting the practice of a democratic project at global level stands out in Delors’ 1992 discourse.

Though not diverting the EC from the course of speeding up political integration among its own member countries – the realistic way forward but nevertheless a challenging enterprise in itself -, a joint Euro-Atlantic effort would account for the ideal approach to progress, the two being in fact “mutually reinforcing”: “In the East-West dialogue, as in North-South relations, democracies cannot afford to rest on their laurels reciting the litany of communism’s failures. Democracies must provide constant proof of the superiority of their political and social model, not simply for themselves, but for the world at large. The Community and the United States complement each other in their main concerns, their traditions and their commitment to freedom, and the rights of the individual. They should act in concert”¹⁸. “Closer integration between the twelve (n.n. states of the EC) has to be matched by greater openness towards the rest of the world”¹⁹.

Europe is known for its secular tradition when it comes to the influence of religious elements in politics and statehood. However, as prospects for a post-communist future are deemed a renewal, a rebirth from within, driven by the force of “unity in diversity”, we remark Delors’ discourse being animated by a metaphorical language, appealing to shared civilization or spiritual values, in reference to both the European and the Euro-

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

¹² COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES, *LECTURE BY PRESIDENT JACQUES DELORS ON EUROPE 1992 AND ITS MEANING FOR AMERICA*, September 22, 1989, <http://aei.pitt.edu/101548/1/51.pdf>, accessed May 14, 2020, p.10.

¹³ *ADDRESS BY PRESIDENT JACQUES DELORS TO THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS: THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AND THE NEW WORLD ORDER*

¹⁴ COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES, *LECTURE BY PRESIDENT JACQUES DELORS ON EUROPE 1992 AND ITS MEANING FOR AMERICA*, pp. 3-4.

¹⁵ ”Single European Act”, in *Official Journal of the European Communities*, June 29, 1987, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:a519205f-924a-4978-96a2-b9af8a598b85.0004.02/DOC_1&format=PDF, accessed May 14, 2020.

¹⁶ *LECTURE ...*, p. 12.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p.7.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 10-12.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p.7.

Atlantic experience lying ahead: “a sense of belonging to the community”, “a new spiritual adventure for Europe”, “the new spirit which Europeans would like to breathe into transatlantic relations”²⁰.

In his inaugural speech, President Bush also resorted to principles, morality and spirituality: “A world refreshed by freedom seems reborn. (...) Great nations of the world are moving towards democracy, through the door of freedom. (...) America is never holy herself unless she is engaged in high-moral principle. We as a people have such a purpose today. It is to make kinder the face of the nation and gentler the face of the world”²¹.

As early as May 1989, President Bush had remarked “the emergence of Europe as a partner in world leadership”²² and that “time had come for << a more mature partnership >>”²³. By stating these, he also helped restored Europeans’ confidence in the power and steadiness of the Western Alliance, previously shaken by Gaullist sentiments (Europe as opposed to America), as he did imply also in his inaugural address by stating that “we will stay strong to protect the peace. We’re keeping our alliances and friendships around the world strong, ever strong”²⁴.

Pointing out Americans’ similar plea for the benefits of democracy, Federico Romero mentions the “enlargement of democracy” as synthesizing the American foreign policy doctrine during the 1990s. In Romero’s words, “after all, it is today-not one or two generations ago-that we reckon to be living in a Wilsonian world of globalized democracy and free trade, and therefore read the twentieth century backward as a long voyage initiated and oriented by Wilson’s inspiration to << make the world safe for democracy>>”²⁵. Conveying the implicit US’ hegemony, he added: “And it is in the 1990s’ most relevant and canonical survey of the history of U.S. foreign relations that Wilson is credited with establishing <<a new American agenda for world affairs>>”²⁶.

2.2. “THERE IS MORE THAT UNITES US THAN DIVIDES US”

The transatlantic relation developed politically favorable in the next years, with expanding cooperation on a broad range of issues entailing international implications: involvement in peace-making processes around the world (see Bosnia, former Yugoslavia), democracy building (see Cuba), countering terrorism and organized crime, developing prospects to eliminate barriers to modern technology and free trade, to name just a few. Partnership was synonym for friendship, as denominated in the European official political discourse.

As enshrined in the New Transatlantic Agenda (NTA, 1995), the US and the EU affirmed their conviction that strong ties bind their peoples, despite the passage of time. The partnership has proved to be successful by promoting peace and prosperity to other nations of the international community.

The general trend must be maintained and permanent adaptation is the key, the document states, as new challenges appear: “For over fifty years, the transatlantic partnership has been the leading force for peace and prosperity for ourselves and for the world. Together, we helped transform adversaries into allies and dictatorships into democracies. (...) These are epic achievements. Today we face new challenges at home and abroad. To meet them, we must further strengthen and adapt the partnership that has served us so well. (...) we can learn from each other's experiences and build new transatlantic bridges. We must first of all seize the

²⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 6, 10, 12.

²¹ CBS News, *George H.W. Bush inaugural address: Jan. 20, 1989*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zMmrNcdmdVY>, accessed May 15, 2020.

²² “North Atlantic Trust”, Survey “European Community”, in *The Economist*, July 7, 1990, pp. 6-12.

²³ *Ibidem*

²⁴ George H.W. Bush inaugural address, *loc. cit.*

²⁵ Romero, *loc. cit.*

²⁶ *Ibidem*.

opportunity presented by Europe's historic transformation to consolidate democracy and free-market economies throughout the continent"²⁷.

At a joint news conference in Washington, D.C. (December 16, 1996), invoking the upcoming 50th anniversary of the Marshall Plan, John Bruton, President of the EU Council, underlined that through this initiative, "a prosperous and triumphant United States assisted Europe back on to its feet"²⁸. He nevertheless mentioned the EU's sped up development that, gradually, enabled the community to aspire standing on an equal position with the US.

Participating in the same event, Jacques Santer, President of the European Commission referred to a world "joint leadership for both Europe and America". He made an overview of common achievements so far in various domains, remarking, among others, the economic benefits of the EU-US cooperation. He introduced the NTA as a highly useful initiative. Further European enlargement towards the East was declared as particularly interesting for the US.

Appreciating the prospects of the transatlantic link, with ambitions at a global scale, President Santer too mentioned the impact of the Marshall Plan and its "natural" correspondence with the Treaty of Rome: "Next year is the 50th anniversary of the Marshall Plan and the 40th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome, which the European Community. Those events are naturally connected. The Marshall Plan has helped to revive and unite Europe, which is now working in a renewed partnership with the United States, throughout the world"²⁹. As we mentioned in the introductory chapter the integrative and the dividing perspective over the evolution of the transatlantic relation after the Cold War, the EU leader also took the opportunity to raise this question, however in an optimistic paradigm, by affirming: "History shows that there is more that unites us than divides us"³⁰.

Santer concluded by saying that "the stronger the Europe becomes, the more effective our joint leadership with the America will be. A united Europe will be a stable, open and powerful friend of the United States"³¹.

US President Bill Clinton confirmed during the White House press conference (December, 1996) that the historical Euro-Atlantic relation has deepened and taken new forms, in the face of new challenges lying ahead. The American leader gave special thanks to the progress achieved through the Transatlantic Business Dialogue, meant to strengthen cooperation between the business community and state government in both the EU and the US³².

9/11 will have stroke a difference of opinion between the two partners separated by the Atlantic, which was visible in public addresses too, as we discuss in the next subchapter.

2.3. LET'S AGREE TO DISAGREE BUT LET'S STAY STRONGER TOGETHER

The change that came along with the terrible events in September 2001 in the United States was felt at the level of political discourse too. European leaders reviewed the US' different stance on Europe and the various points of disagreement that have appeared between the two in the context of the Iraq crisis. Europeans started to feel the US' shift of opinion, in the sense that it didn't appreciate the EU integration project as

²⁷ *The New Transatlantic Agenda*,

https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/124321/new_transatlantic_agenda_en.pdf, accessed May 16, 2020.

²⁸ C-SPAN, *U.S.-Europe Relations*, December 16, 1996, <https://www.c-span.org/video/?77359-1/us-europe-relations>, accessed May 15, 2020.

²⁹ *Ibidem*.

³⁰ *Ibidem*.

³¹ *Ibidem*.

³² *Ibidem*.

supporter of a strong Euro-Atlantic alliance any longer, but rather as a threat to American supremacy. Metaphorical approaches to the transatlantic relation didn't cease to appear too.

In his speech at the dinner with German Marshall Fund of the US (Washington, 24 June, 2003), Romano Prodi, President of the EU Commission, took the opportunity to ensure his audience that even though "much has been made of the planetary aspects of our relationship in the last few months"³³, he strongly believes that "this story about Venus and Mars is a galactic misunderstanding. And even if you think we live on different planets, don't we orbit the same sun? And aren't we bound by the same principles?"³⁴ he asked the audience rhetorically.

Though he was not afraid of "the odd rhetorical blunders on either side of the Atlantic"³⁵, the EU official did feel concerned about the paradigm of "the new and old Europe" He invited that this terrible division be rejected, as "you divide your foes, not your friends"³⁶. The EU was mostly concerned with the enlargement of best practice models in terms of politics and market economy as to encompass new members in its immediate neighborhood (as part of its "Wider Europe" strategy to build up its "ring of friends"), while the US, living in a post 9/11 scenario, was practicing a "new pro-active approach to potential threats throughout the world"³⁷. This, however, should not have been an impediment for Europeans and Americans to further consolidate their traditional, successful cooperation.

The reason that Prodi gave to this recalled that "effective actions and military force have always been accompanied by a determination to generate confidence and trust, which are highly valuable assets in international affairs"³⁸. In other words, the EU and the US approaches are complementary, prompting medium-to-long term and a short-term vision, respectively, "but they do not rule each other out". Instead, they are mutually reinforcing, as military power need to be backed up by confidence and trust, the Head of the EU Commission argued. Trust inspires hope. If there is no hope, there will always be hatred. And here is precisely where the European soft power comes in to change things for the better.

While in Washington, Romano Prodi also invoked the real transatlantic achievements so far, particularly pointing out to trade cooperation, which should encourage other dimensions as well. He restated their partnership "on equal terms" and that "a strong American-European partnership is vital for the world"³⁹.

In his address in Milan, 2004, the EU leader framed the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the following terms as having shaken the transatlantic long-established relationship, impacting upon the Union's internal affairs too. The crisis revived old stereotypes, despite of the major progress both sides have made in recent years⁴⁰.

Nevertheless, Prodi declared himself "optimistic", continuing to advocate for the complementing European and transatlantic vocations of the EU. "A strong, integrated Europe is clearly in the United States' interest too"⁴¹. The European Commission President reminded his audience the common values that the EU and the US share: freedom, justice and democracy. These, he argued, must be the real force driving the old partnership ahead, despite the divergences, to tackle the complex issues at the top of the international agenda.⁴²

Just like his predecessors and following the same trend in his discourses, the EU leader looked back to the undeniable progress reached because of transatlantic cooperation, in terms of commerce, security and politics. He underlined the political factor in maintaining economic progress: "These economic links are

³³ Romano Prodi, *Looking ahead in transatlantic relations* - Dinner at Rayburn House with German Marshall Fund of the United States, Washington, 24 June, 2003,

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_03_322, accessed May 19, 2020.

³⁴ *Ibidem*.

³⁵ *Ibidem*.

³⁶ *Ibidem*.

³⁷ *Ibidem*.

³⁸ *Ibidem*.

³⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁰ Romano Prodi, *A stronger alliance in a changing world*, ISPI, Milan, February 20, 2004, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_04_90, accessed May 16, 2020.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

⁴² *Ibidem*.

underpinned by a common political heritage”⁴³. Resorting to EU Vice-President Cheney statement in Davos⁴⁴, he recalled the success of modern Europe was also the result of an enduring transatlantic alliance overcoming monumental challenges.⁴⁵

The fight for democracy remained a constant in the European political addresses. The Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq were commonly invoked examples of joint transatlantic commitment to support fledgling democracies and the process of reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Additionally, Prodi pleaded for calm and for the acceptance of others’ viewpoints as legitimate. He renewed the EU’s embracing of “effective multilateralism” in international relations and promoted it as the ideal, legitimate political behavior to be exported worldwide, inspired by its very impact on the European integration and on the process political and economic cooperation⁴⁶.

Taking office in 2004, Jose Manuel Durao Barroso returned to the shared values and cultural elements that Europeans and Americans rejoice and emphasized in his speech from 2005 (New York, Council on Foreign Relations) that “due to our history, Europe and the US do enjoy deep bonds of kinship and share both culture and values”⁴⁷. Following on his predecessor steps, he also appealed to the economic success of the transatlantic partnership, encompassing the world’s two biggest trading partners, a two-way direct investment stock and employment opportunities for both Europeans and Americans. “As many as 14 million jobs in the EU and the US depend on transatlantic commercial ties”⁴⁸.

Beyond the symbolic or mystical (political) thought (“the mystical sense of brotherhood”) as threats and challenges became more and more part of a globalised environment, the accent he put was on the global dimension of the stake of the transatlantic partnership, where interests and perceived threats are often the same for the EU and the US.⁴⁹ Undoubtedly, security-related issues and countering terrorism remained on top positions on the common transatlantic agenda, besides the prosperous commercial cooperation. The Commission President did mention in this context the recent dialogue developing between the European Policy Dialogue on Border and Transport Security (2004) and the US Department of Homeland Security.

As the EU struggled to consolidate its individual position while integrating diversity in its own citadel (and still doing it today), the partnership among equals in a complex and unpredictable international environment remained constant in the European political discourse, signaling the community’s growing ambitions.⁵⁰

The longstanding divergence between unilateralism and multilateralism was subtly referred to in many of the speeches held by EU officials. Barroso warned that “America will not be more successful in achieving its objectives by taking the unilateral path”⁵¹ and Romano Prodi affirmed that “we (i.e. the EU member states) were born multilateralists”⁵². A joint EU-US approach will continue to be advocated for in Barroso’s second term as Head of the European Commission, as his future public speeches will have revealed.

⁴³ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁴ Office of the Vice President, *Remarks by the Vice President to the World Economic Forum*, January 24, 2004, <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2004/01/20040124-1.html>, accessed May 21, 2020.

⁴⁵ Romano Prodi, *A stronger alliance in a changing world*, *loc. cit*.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁷ José Manuel BARROSO, *The EU and the US: a bilateral partnership for global solutions*, Council on Foreign Relations New York, 13 May, 2005, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_05_276, accessed May 19, 2020.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*.

⁵² Romano Prodi, *Looking ahead in transatlantic relations*, *loc. cit*.

2.4. THE “NEW ATLANTICISM” ERA: THINK GLOBAL, ACT TRANSATLANTIC

The Lisbon Treaty has given the EU enhanced prerogatives to strengthen its position (including at global level). It has offered the EU a new profile in foreign affairs, reinforcing its efficiency and its capacity to deliver⁵³. Relying on this dimension, President José Manuel Barroso renewed his faith in the potential of the Western community to make a difference by acting together in a challenging global environment that was obviously imposing the involvement of powerful actors. More than just a partner, the US was deemed to be a friend of the EU, thus occupying a special position on its foreign policy agenda.

If Barroso's first mandate focused on consolidating the enlarged European Union, his second term in office will have been focused rather on an agenda for global Europe, as he himself declared in 2010.⁵⁴

Additionally, more dynamic should be fueled to the bilateral relation, qualitatively speaking. Shared values (solidarity, freedom, democracy, global free trade etc.) still largely influence political interests and they do represent the guiding principles of political behavior, as Jose Barroso had reiterated in a 2010 speech: “the formulation of political interests is infused by our values, whether we are aware of it or not”⁵⁵. He strongly supported the idea that all these common values will not leave enough place for the EU and US interests to diverge to a tremendous extent in the future. From a geopolitical perspective, the transatlantic relation is remarkable through a common, ideological vision of the global order, based precisely on these values, which mean in fact, “a win-win relationship”.

In spite of allegations about the newly emerging powers that could render the old transatlantic partnership “less important, (...) just one normal partnership among many”⁵⁶(the multipolarity argument, as framed by the EU leader), Barroso counter argued by stating that, even though the new global order required “both reinforced bilateral collaboration with other partners and multilateral global management”⁵⁷, Europeans and Americans still rejoice more similarities with each other than with any other international actor, within their so-called “natural partnership”.

Between the old and the new Atlanticism there was space for a new, dynamic and strategic approach in bilateral EU-US relations, as conveyed by the European official: in a world full of interdependencies, to “think global and acting transatlantic”⁵⁸. Bilateral summits, agreed upon since the adoption of the Transatlantic Declaration, “must be agenda-setting and decision-making events”⁵⁹, they must be rendered “much more efficient and results-oriented, and occasions for a high-level, less scripted, strategic dialogue between leaders”⁶⁰.

Despite the financial crisis, the overall successful economic results stemming from the transatlantic trade market were prompted in political discourse as encouraging cooperation in other areas as well or the development of already existing initiatives between the two powers (reforming the global and financial governance system, mitigating climate change whilst boosting energy security, engaging further with third parties - such as China, India and Brazil -, managing conflicts, state and peace building in Afghanistan and also Pakistan, creating a common transatlantic area of security etc.).⁶¹

⁵³ European Commission, *José Manuel Durão Barroso-A NEW ATLANTICISM FOR THE 21ST CENTURY*, Brussels Forum 2010, Brussels, 26 March 2010, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_10_135, accessed May 20, 2020.

⁵⁴ EC, *J.M. Barroso, A NEW ATLANTICISM...*, loc. cit.

⁵⁵ EC, *J.M. Barroso, A NEW ATLANTICISM FOR THE 21ST CENTURY*, loc. cit.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁶¹ *Ibidem*.

Further proliferation of security threats has determined European political leaders reinforce the importance of the Euro-Atlantic partnership, on the basis of common values. Constantly perpetuated by Presidents of the EU Commission, we can trace this reference in Jean-Claude Juncker's 2016 speech too: "our first duty is to show unity, and re-affirm the values we share. Human rights, freedom, democracy and, the keystone on which the others rest, the rule of law. They go to the core of the Euro-Atlantic alliance. They make us who we are. They do guarantee our way of life"⁶².

No less true is that that the EU itself was starting in parallel to prospect more and more the potential of developing a European permanent structured cooperation platform in its way to a future Security and Defense Union. President Juncker also raised this point when discussing priorities for a global Europe in his 2016 discourse entitled "State of the Union", while subtly implying that relying on the US' military power should not be the supreme ideal of European nations.

Juncker too advocated for the deepening of bilateral relations, as the transatlantic solution was the most beneficial one to adapt to and address the challenges of the new global order, the two poles being complementary, providing "peace and stability in Europe, our neighborhood and beyond"⁶³.

On matters of trade, the long-debated TTIP will regress from "an agreement we need" (Juncker), to a source of longstanding divergences between Europeans and Americans and things will have got even worse in the following years up to the end of the Juncker Commission, as the incoming US President, Donald Trump, will have brought in a totally unexpected foreign policy agenda, marked by the "America First" strategy, much to Europe's concern over a broad range of common efforts to deliver global solutions.

2.5. AMERICA FIRST, BUT EUROPE ALONE? OR MORE EUROPE?

A renewed challenge to EU's multilateralist approach in international relations, Donald Trump's "America First" policy has inaugurated a new era in the EU-US engagement to cooperate on areas of mutual interest, as its implications have touch many of the strategic ones.

The idiosyncratic leadership in the White House has surprised unpleasantly by destabilizing a longstanding metaphor of close friendship and a transatlantic identity based on common values while promoting a "them versus us" paradigm, which has harmed European political trust to a considerable extent.

Liam Kennedy, Professor of American Studies at University College in Dublin, opinionates that "transatlantic relations, a symbolic linchpin of the Western-led global order, are in a parlous state. This reflects both internal crises in the US and in many European nations and a loss of faith in broader visions of supranational alliances"⁶⁴.

Recognition of Europe's growing capacity to develop, broadly driven by its inner conviction and resources after the American recovery programs gave it the first impetus, was now replaced by President Trump's historical analogy of the American messianic and altruistic mission to help other nations evolve, while the course of its own country was neglected or has suffered because the aid was detrimental to the US benefit.

With nuances of rivalry and competition, in a "friend or foe" paradigm, transatlantic relations have been frequently questioned by European leaders, as threats to common security or even common Western ideology began to take shape. Disengagement from or intentions to provoke cornerstone multilateral arrangements (the Paris Agreement, the WTO framework, the Iran nuclear deal), a new vision on NATO's purposes (calls upon the Allies to equalize their burden sharing on defense have existed before but they have

⁶² European Commission, *Press point remarks by President Jean-Claude Juncker at the joint press point with Donald Tusk, President of the European Council and Barack Obama, President of the United States at the EU-US Leaders' Summit*, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_16_2457, accessed May 20, 2020.

⁶³ European Commission, *Press point remarks by President Jean-Claude Juncker, loc. cit.*

⁶⁴ Liam Kennedy, *Coronavirus: Europe struggles to adapt to a post-American world*, <https://theconversation.com/coronavirus-europe-struggles-to-adapt-to-a-post-american-world-138392>, May 13, 2020, accessed May 21, 2020.

taken now a more decisive tone) and the rapprochement to political leaders like Vladimir Putin, Kim Jong-un or Xi Jing Ping have all cast doubts on America's traditional partners in Europe.

The EU defense capabilities have started to be thought upon more and more seriously, even though historical experience and pragmatic geopolitical analysis demonstrate us that it is not a wise decision to move ahead by oneself in this regard.

Trade wars have been long dividing the once close partners, attracting a vicious spiral of "tit-for-tat" counterbalancing measures to impose tariff barriers on targeted products. In April 2017, the US Administration began investigating whether steel and aluminum imports compromise American national security. On this basis, as suggested by the US Department of Commerce, American production could be boosted by either imposing new tariffs on steel and aluminum products or by setting an imports quota. For the worse, metal tariffs were convened to be applied and this has started a spiral effect, as Europeans announced they were ready to retaliate with the same measures imposed on specific US products.

Despite temporary exemptions being granted to the EU, an agreement in bilateral negotiated with the US Department of Treasury on permanent exemption from steel and aluminum tariffs has not been reached. And thus, the open trade battle continued and prospects by the US part to extend measures to imported European vehicles were explored.

European Commissioner Margrethe Vestager, Commissioner for Competition Policy in the Juncker Commission and currently the executive VP of the EC for A Europe Fit for the Digital Age, with an expanded role in charge of regulating US tech companies, has imposed as an extremely vocal figure in the EU, defending European interests against US trade protectionism and the market dominance of US digital companies.⁶⁵

Delivering a speech at Harvard University, Commissioner Vestager warned "the EU will respond <<to the tariffs to defend European industry, and the world trading system>>"⁶⁶. She framed President Trump's decisions on trade matters as "one-sided protectionist measures, which hurt, not just jobs, but the whole system of rules that makes our global economy work"⁶⁷.

When finally, disputes' escalation seemed to come to an end, transatlantic relations were summarized in the Joint EU-U.S. Statement (2018) as entering "a new phase in the relationship between the United States and the European Union – a phase of close friendship"⁶⁸, though maybe it was a little too ambitious to call it in these terms. Europe's ambitions to remain a global player and its equal place in the EU-US partnership nevertheless remained unchanged, as Jean-Claude Juncker noted, visiting Washington in 2018.

Taking office in 2019, Ursula von der Leyen has remarked in her Political Guidelines the tendency for unilateralism that might appeal to many state actors, unfortunately: "Existing powers are going down new paths alone. New powers are emerging and consolidating. Changes in climate, technology and demography are transforming our societies and way of life. This has left a feeling of unease and anxiety in many communities across Europe"⁶⁹.

On a different perspective, she restated what her predecessors have also advocated on repeat: "Multilateralism is in Europe's DNA. It is our guiding principle in the world. My Commission will keep on

⁶⁵ Mehreen Khan, Jim Brunsden, *Brussels braced for EU trade and tech battles with US*, September 10, 2019, <https://www.ft.com/content/ed918b2c-d3b4-11e9-a0bd-ab8ec6435630>, accessed July 22, 2020.

⁶⁶ David Shephardson, Mike Stone, *Trump threatens to tax European auto imports*, March 3, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trade-autos/trump-threatens-to-tax-european-auto-imports-idUSKCN1GF0QJ>, accessed July 22, 2020.

⁶⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁸ European Commission, *Joint U.S.-EU Statement*, 25 July 2018, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/STATEMENT_18_4687, accessed May 20, 2020.

⁶⁹ Ursula von der Leyen, *A Union that strives for more-My agenda for Europe*, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/political-guidelines-next-commission_en.pdf, accessed May 20, 2020.

championing this approach and ensure that we uphold and update the rules based global order”⁷⁰. The strategic approach continued to be valued as the ideal solution for future prosperity.

On transatlantic commercial relations she seemed willing “to work to strengthen a balanced and mutually beneficial trading partnership with the United States”⁷¹. Likewise on security and defense, she argued, as in front of developing hybrid threats EU and US capabilities can be rationally used in a complementary manner. Pleading for “more Europe” and taking the European Defense Union further will not imperil NATO’s objectives, she admitted.

On top of that, Ursula von der Leyen upheld the vision of taking the practice traditional democratic values to the next step by welcoming the establishment of a EU-wide Rule of Law Mechanism⁷².

Meeting President Trump at the Economic Forum in Davos (January 21, 2020), von der Leyen declared herself “a European and a committed transatlantist”⁷³, and that “it was important to me to emphasize the unbreakable bonds between our societies and economies. This common foundation builds on decades of friendship, cooperation in culture, science, business and youth exchange”⁷⁴. With an optimist feeling, she foresaw the possibility to work upon “a positive U.S.-EU agenda in trade, as well as on technology, energy and much more besides”⁷⁵.

Transatlantic solidarity in times of the new coronavirus pandemic was another test the EU-US relations have been put to, especially as Chinese so called “mask diplomacy” and humanitarian aid were claimed to have been taken advantage of this gap by leading the international community involvement in addressing the crisis beyond its borders, while the US reaction came at a later time. Lucrezia Poggetti, an analyst at the Mercator Institute for China Studies in Berlin commented that “aid is much needed, but in supplying it, China is consciously exercising its soft power. There is a major propaganda push at play on the side of the Chinese with some willing enablers on the European side”⁷⁶.

Banning flights from European countries to the US, the Trump administration disappointed again its traditional allies. Some scholars even pointed to the US’ so-called “Wild West” maneuver to outbid for medical equipment bound to be delivered to EU countries⁷⁷. French and German officials have complained about this practice of changing consignments at the last minute. Andreas Geisel, Berlin Secretary of Interior has labeled it “act of modern piracy”⁷⁸. In a radio interview for RTL France, Jean Rottner, leader of the Grand Est regional council recalled that “on the (airport) tarmac, the Americans get out their cash and pay three or four times what we have offered”⁷⁹.

Discussing a “post-America world”, Professor Kennedy also warned about the frailty of the EU crisis management. “The European loss of confidence in American leadership coincides with a consuming crisis in

⁷⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁷¹ *Ibidem*.

⁷² European Commission, *Opening Statement in the European Parliament Plenary Session by Ursula von der Leyen*, July 16, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/it/speech_19_4230, accessed May 20, 2020.

⁷³ European Commission, *Read-out by the Commission of the meeting between Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and U.S. President Donald Trump*, January 21, 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/statement_20_97, accessed September 20, 2020.

⁷⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁷⁵ EC, *Opening Statement by Ursula von der Leyen*, loc. cit.

⁷⁶ Alan Crawford, Peter Martin, Bloomberg, ‘*Health Silk Road: China showers Europe with coronavirus aid as both spar with Trump*’, March 19, 2020, <https://fortune.com/2020/03/19/china-europe-coronavirus-aid-trump/>, accessed May 21, 2020.

⁷⁷ Kashish Parpiani, *COVID-19’s impact on EU solidarity and US healthcare debate*, May 1, 2020, <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/covid19s-impact-on-eu-solidarity-and-us-healthcare-debate-65500/>, accessed May 21, 2020.

⁷⁸ Richard Lough, Andreas Rinke, *U.S. coronavirus supply spree sparks outrage among allies*, April 3, 2020, <https://in.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-masks/u-s-coronavirus-supply-sprees-sparks-outrage-among-allies-idINKBN21L253>, accessed May 21, 2020.

⁷⁹ *Ibidem*.

the European project”⁸⁰, he said. “As China is on the rise, competing for global power status, “a divided Europe will need to develop <<an appetite for power >> amid the realization that it can no longer count on the US. If a post-American Europe is to collectively rise to the challenges of the new geopolitical realities it will need to be unified by something stronger than its distaste for the American president”⁸¹.

In times when the EU had been criticized over the lack of a unitary response to the novel biological crisis, chairing the Global Response pledging event, Ursula von der Leyen stated that “at a time when we are sitting further apart than usual, the world has shown it is standing closer together than ever before”⁸². To meet the objective of “accelerate development, production and equitable global access to new essential health technologies”⁸³, she announced an EU contribution of EUR 1 billion in grants and EUR 400 million in guaranteed loans, reprioritizing other financial instruments.⁸⁴

As the event brought together health organizations all over the world to join forces for an international cooperation on vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics, the Head of the European Commission underlined that “this is the true power of unity and humanity”⁸⁵. The appeal was launched by global health actors, private entities and relevant stakeholders. It rejoiced the collaborative effort of the EU and individual states in Europe, as well as Japan and Saudi Arabia.

2.6. POLITICAL SIGNALS IN TIMES OF WAR

The new geopolitical context that the war in Ukraine (starting February 24, 2022 with the Russian invasion) has created imposed a new framework for transatlantic consultation and response. Following the EU-US summit that took place in June 2021 in Brussels, leaders agreed to meet again in October 2023, as a continuation of joint efforts to counter the ongoing war implications. Also, incumbent US President Joe Biden did attend an EU leaders’ reunion in March 2022.⁸⁶ With that occasion, the two parts reconfirmed the need to boost transatlantic security and defence, and NATO-EU cooperation is vital to attain this goal.⁸⁷

The 2021 bilateral statement read: “We, the leaders of the European Union and the United States, met today to renew our Transatlantic partnership, set a Joint Transatlantic Agenda for the post-pandemic era, and commit to regular dialogue to take stock of progress (...) We are committed to uphold the rules-based international order with the United Nations at its core, reinvigorate and reform multilateral institutions where needed, and cooperate with all those who share these objectives.”⁸⁸

Upheld by concrete foreign policy decision-making, political discourses are often a good reflection of the state of bilateral relations. Traversing its ups and downs as an effect of distinctively framing global changes, we have seen the evolution of the transatlantic partnership since the end of the Cold War as exposed in the EU leaders’ official speeches and they particularly welcomed the strengthening of ties, while pledging to intensify the EU integration project, a factor of stability within the Western alliance based on shared values.

⁸⁰ Liam Kennedy, *loc. cit.*

⁸¹ *Ibidem.*

⁸² European Commission, *Von der Leyen on Coronavirus Global Response: World stands united against coronavirus and will win*, May 5, 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/AC_20_811, accessed May 21, 2020.

⁸³ *Ibidem.*

⁸⁴ *Ibidem.*

⁸⁵ *Ibidem.*

⁸⁶ Barbara Moens, Suzanne Lynch and Sarah Anne Aarup, *EU-US summit penciled in for October*, April 5, 2023, <https://www.politico.eu/article/eu-us-summit-october-joen-biden-charles-michel-ursula-von-der-leyen/> accessed May 3, 2023.

⁸⁷ European Council, *Joint readout by the European Council and the United States*, March 24, 2022, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/03/24/joint-readout-by-the-european-council-and-the-united-states/>, accessed May 3, 2023.

⁸⁸ European Council, *EU-US Summit 2021 – Statement Towards a renewed Transatlantic partnership*, June 15, 2021, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2021/06/15/eu-us-summit-statement-towards-a-renewed-transatlantic-partnership/>, accessed May 3, 2023.

Post-1990 European political leaders have highlighted the EU's traditional commitment to multilateralism in International Relations (which has sometimes conflicted with the American preference for unilateralism). Mutual interests to address challenges prefiguring at global level were expressed as more important than the inner societal differences.

Shared Western values rejoiced large political support in the EU and concrete examples of peace and democracy building processes alongside with increased economic cooperation based on free market rules underlined this advocacy to preserve and consolidate peace, freedom, democracy and respect for human rights.

Obviously, there is time for an urgent refresh of the transatlantic relation, as the critical stage had already been reached for some time. The old partnership seemed to some scholars impossible to revive under the current circumstances and Europe had many times faced the alternative of reaching out to other international actors or accelerating its internal resource management to fill the gap. However, in the long run, perils not only cover the losses of a great transatlantic economic potential, but also a more comprehensive instability of the ideological, democratic, political and spiritual value-based Western architecture, given the Euro-Atlantic community will not find the means to overcome this historical rupture.

CHAPTER 3. THE EVOLUTION OF THE ECONOMIC DIMENSION WITHIN THE TRANSATLANTIC RELATION

This chapter proposes a chronological analysis of transatlantic macroeconomic relations, assessing them against the most important bilateral achievements, joint political commitments, as well as against the opportunities and challenges arising from major events in the global economy and from the EU-US individual perception (framing) of values such as consumer protection, food safety or market transparency.

There is wide consensus that transatlantic economy is a benchmark in terms of globalizing the world economy. The economic relation is a valuable example for both the EU's policy development and for the overall transatlantic partnership. Post-Cold War transatlantic economic relations (also influenced by transformations occurring from the abolition of communist regimes in Europe and the globalization of international economic interactions) have confirmed the significant degree of interdependence and integration between Europe and North America's market economies. They actually "became a stabilizer of the overall relationship"¹, as Günter Burghardt, the EU's Ambassador in Washington, DC, (1999 - 2004), noted in The European Union's Transatlantic Relationship.

EU-US interaction reached a high-level profile especially in the fields of commercial and competition policy and also regulatory cooperation, so the EU was treated as an equal partner by the US political and business community².

Undoubtedly, interdependent transatlantic market relations were facilitated by the EU's ascension as global economic actor. By developing an integrated economic and commercial policy, the EU managed to attract US appeal and confidence, becoming its most important commercial partner.

The European Commission has played a major role in European Community (EC)-US bilateral commercial negotiations, as the main exponent of Brussels' economic policies and the intermediary between the Union and the US on economic matters. As a consequence, the innovative dimension of transatlantic cooperation was defined by the process of institutionalizing economic relations³.

3.1. TRANSATLANTIC ECONOMY - A VIEW FROM JACQUES DELORS AND GEORGE HERBERT WALKER BUSH

Under the mandates of the Jacques Delors' Commission and the US' George Herbert Walker Bush republican administration, the two sides entered one of the most productive periods of the EU-US relationship. Therefore, the 1990 Transatlantic Declaration (TAD), adopted around the November CSCE Summit, has formally defined the principles of EC-US cooperation comprehensively. The two parts committed to refresh their transatlantic and global commercial cooperation – while the US was leaving aside their 'Fortress Europe' critical paradigm related to the EC's '1992' ambition to complete the Internal Market.⁴ Pursuant to the TAD, the EC and the US broadly committed themselves to set up an institutional structure for constant and intensive consultation.⁵

Procedurally speaking, the TAD introduced a consultation mechanism at various levels, encompassing biannual summits, ministerial and working group encounters or briefings with the EPC structures. The

¹ Günter Burghardt, "The European Union's Transatlantic Relationship", in *EU Diplomacy Papers*, Brussels, December 18, 2006, p. 14, <https://www.coleurope.eu/research-paper/european-unions-transatlantic-relationship>, accessed February 6, 2019.

² G. Burghardt, *loc.cit.*

³ Michelle P. Egan, "Introduction", in Michelle P. Egan (ed.), *op. cit.*, p.3.

⁴ G. Burghardt, *loc. cit.*, pp. 11-12.

⁵ *Transatlantic Declaration on EC-US Relations*, 1990, p. 3, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/124320/trans_declaration_90_en.pdf, accessed February 11, 2020.

Commission and the Member States were committed by the TAD initiative through the respective Council Presidencies. At the initiative of the Commission, the previous format of “High Level Consultations” had been changed with “regular 'sub-cabinet meetings' to cover the various working level contacts on the many issues of community competence”.⁶

Improvements could be traced by assessing the EC-US compromises on some of the disputes related to the Single European Act (SEA), such as the banking directive or several standardization procedures. The EU’s single market was extremely advantageous for a 20% rise in US investments (from 1960 to 1988), as American corporations had no longer faced the necessity to cope with many distinct national bureaucracies. The fact that by the first quarter of 1990s the United States were rejoicing a surplus in trade with the EC was notable.

Between 1991 and 1994, EU imports of goods from the US have gradually decline, although not very steeply, while exports rose with about 10 billion euro from one year to another. The situation slowly changed in 1995, when the EU saw its forth enlargement wave, with the accession of Austria, Finland and Sweden.

Table.3.1.1 Transatlantic trade in goods, 1990-1995, in billions of Euros (share of EU total)

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995 (EU 15)
EU imports from the US (share of EU total)	88,957 (20.5%)	92,0 (18.6%)	86,8 (17.8%)	84,3 (17.5%)	92,6 (17.3%)	103,7 (19.0%)
EU exports to the US (share of EU total)	82,004 (20.0%)	71,2 (16.8%)	73,8 (16.9%)	85,1 (17.6%)	96,4 (18.0%)	103,3 (18.0%)

Source: Own contribution, based on Eurostat data, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3217494/5690572/KS-CV-07-001-EN.PDF/20be419b-1b1a-4903-812f-f6d24411c923?version=1.0>

Still, economic disputes aroused again between the EC and the US and President Bush Senior had to protect American economic interests, as his argument went: “We’re not to disarm unilaterally in agriculture”.⁷ This issue has still not been compromised upon by the two sides, and it continues to be a sensitive aspect in more recent transatlantic trade negotiations, as Brussels maintains a firm position on its particular safety and quality standards when it comes to agricultural products.

The Bush administration, like all its predecessors since President Dwight David Eisenhower, hoped that successful GATT negotiations would ease the path for American goods to enter the EC market. But still, agriculture remained the largest source of disagreement between the transatlantic partners. France was particularly vehement regarding the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform and “cultural production.” Nevertheless, good progress had been achieved in these negotiations under President George Herbert Walker Bush, although the agreement itself was only completed under his successor in the Oval Office, President Bill Clinton.⁸

⁶ G. Burghardt, *loc.cit.*

⁷ Geir Lundestad, *op. cit.*

⁸ *Ibidem.*

3.2. TRANSATLANTIC ECONOMY UNDER THE PRESIDENCY OF BILL CLINTON

While the TAD encompassed various fields of Euro-Atlantic cooperation, focusing largely on security aspects, diminishing perceived security threats from post-communist Russia increased focus on the economic dimension by the Clinton Administration.

On the principle of deepening and enlarging overseas economic connections, signing of the NTA has marked the consolidation of the institutionalization process in the EU-US economic relations. Its four main goals were stated in the terms of 1) "promoting peace, stability, democracy, and development; 2) expanding world trade and economic growth; 3) meeting global challenges (including cooperation fields such as environment protection, protection of public health, and law enforcement issues); and 4) building ties between EU and US representatives from business, academic, consumer, labour, environment, and government circles".⁹

The NTA also introduced new concepts, such as economic security and competitiveness. Foreseeing a confidence-building process¹⁰, among its objectives, the NTA included creating the necessary institutional framework for global trade development and tighter economic relations.¹¹ It involved two completely new aspects: creating a transatlantic governance system and involving the non-governmental sector.¹²

The Joint Action Plan (JAP) supported these objectives with a number of concrete actions, like consolidating the WTO, liberalizing financial services, implementing intellectual property rights, preparing to launch a new transatlantic economic market-where barrier to goods and services' exchange and to investments are gradually eliminated-, developing information and telecommunication technology, enhancing dialogue opportunities in the fields of energy, employment and economic growth.¹³

The NTA together with the JPA consolidated the 1990 agenda in accordance with EU developments under the Maastricht Treaty (in force since 1 November 1993), the progressive implementation of the CFSP, the enlargement and pre-accession strategies and the necessary preparations for the EU's 'Agenda 2000', convened upon at the December 1995 European Council in Madrid.¹⁴

EU-US summits became the official framework (forum) to discuss, manage and supervise the coordination of the two blocs' economic policies. Additionally, the Transatlantic Business Dialogue (TBD) was designed to informally strengthen cooperation between the transatlantic business community and state government in the US and EU (hereby understanding the role of the European Commission).¹⁵ TBD (or TABD) accounted for one of the four non-governmental fora or "transatlantic dialogues"- resulting from the NTA-, alongside with the ones established in the fields of labor (TALD), environment (TAED) and consumers (TACD), to promote specific categories' interests. As Mark A. Pollack and Gregory Shaffer argued, only the business dialogue format has met regularly, while the other three have been largely neglected.

Prospects for a very strong transatlantic economic relation were reconsidered in 1998, when collaboration in various policy fields had failed to meet the partners' initial expectancies. In spite of efforts deployed by the already institutionalized NTA, publicized trade disagreements over bananas, beef and extraterritorial sanctions still raised concerns, emphasizing the need for deeper engagement to ease economic

⁹ Burghardt, *loc. cit.*, p. 13.

¹⁰ US Mission to the European Union, *Transatlantic Economic Partnership – Plan of Action*, <https://useu.usmission.gov/transatlantic-economic-partnership-plan-action/>, accessed February 11, 2020.

¹¹ Lionel Barber, "The New Transatlantic Agenda", in *Europe*, No. 369, September 1997, p. 5.

¹² Mark A. Pollack and Gregory C. Shaffer, "Who Governs" in Pollack and Shaffer, (eds.), *Transatlantic Governance in the Global Economy*, New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001, p.290.

¹³ L. Barber, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

¹⁴ Burghardt, *loc. cit.*, p. 12.

¹⁵ Barber, *op. cit.*, p.5.

exchange and prevent conflict escalation. Thus, the European Commission called in April 1998 for a “New Transatlantic Marketplace”¹⁶.

The initiative targeted as priorities: 1) “a widespread removal of technical barriers to trade in goods through an extensive process of mutual recognition and/or harmonization, promoting both consumer and business interests; 2) a political commitment to eliminate by 2010 all industrial tariffs on a MFN basis, through multilateral negotiations, provided that a critical mass of other trading partners do the same; 3) a free trade area in services, bearing in mind the criteria and requirements established by the Council; 4) liberalization beyond multilateral or plurilateral agreements in the areas of government procurement, intellectual property and investment”.¹⁷

However, the Commission’s initiative lacked the necessary support from the Council of Ministers and finally, the EU and the US secured in May 18, 1998, at the London Summit, another deal, known as the Transatlantic Economic Partnership (TEP), to intensify economic cooperation. The TEP was aimed to address the development of multilateral and bilateral collaboration and of joint enterprises in the field of commercial exchanges and investments.

The TEP prioritized the accomplishment of several concrete actions, at multilateral (further stimulating liberalization, establishing regulatory dialogues within the WTO framework to facilitate the negotiation process, settling eventual disputes, implementing agreements, encouraging developing countries to get involved etc.) and bilateral level (access to regulatory procedures, enhancing cooperation on regulation, removing the remaining trade barriers, the mutual recognition of technical standards in various fields-expanding Mutual Recognition Agreements or MRAs, growing market access in the EU and the US, coordination of agricultural, biotechnology and consumer protection policies etc.).¹⁸

The TEP introduced a warning and preventing mechanism in case of commercial disputes between Europeans and Americans¹⁹, facilitating an “early warning system”²⁰ to inform on regulatory measures aimed at containing disputes, mainly concerning food safety issues.²¹ Monitoring and implementing agreements signed under its umbrella was attributed to a board, established to strengthen the institutional framework for transatlantic economic relations.²²

On one hand, the early warning system proved its usefulness in detecting hidden technical barriers to trade, but on the other hand, increased early warning mechanisms could not have guaranteed that legislators or regulators are willing to reassess and adjust domestic regulations. An example in this regard can be found in the EU-US regulatory disputes over beef hormones or copyright issues that warning mechanisms could not solve and where the main obstacle hindering the case resolution was equally represented on the two sides by the legislators and regulators’ sovereignty, rather than a lack of information.²³

The Bonn Summit Declaration (1999) represented a further step under the aegis of the NTA principles. Both sides assumed a “full and equal partnership”²⁴ to cover the economic, political and security realms. The Declaration outlined the commonly envisaged path their relationship was about to follow over the decade ahead.

¹⁶ Commission of the European Communities, 1998a, *The New Transatlantic Marketplace: Draft Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee*, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:1998:0125:FIN:EN:PDF>, accessed February 11, 2020

¹⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹⁸ *Parteneriatul Economic Transatlantic*, http://europa.eu.int/commexternal_relations/us/economicpartnership/trans_econ_partner_11_98.htm, accessed February 11, 2020.

¹⁹ Ana-Maria Stoian, *op.cit.*, 6, p. 50.

²⁰ M. A. Pollack, *The Political Economy of the Transatlantic Partnership*, Robert Schumann Centre for Advanced Studies, 2003, p.30.

²¹ Burghardt, *loc. cit.*, p. 13.

²² A. Stoian, *op.cit.*, p.50.

²³ M. A. Pollack, *The Political Economy*..., p.30.

²⁴ US Department of State, *Bonn Declaration*, June 21, 1999, https://1997-2001.state.gov/regions/eur/eu/decl_990621_useu_bonn.html, accessed May 12, 2020.

Reiterating commitments made under the TEP framework and invoking the EU's internal development, ("the ongoing integration process has enabled the EU to extend its reach in world affairs"²⁵) the document reads: "The transatlantic marketplace has become broader and more open than ever before. We will use actively our Transatlantic Economic Partnership further to eliminate economic barriers between us and promote cooperation among our regulators. We will build on that partnership to strengthen the rules-based international trading system, to set the agenda for a more open, accessible and transparent world trading system (...) We will work energetically to maintain and raise high standards of protection for health, worker, consumer, product and environmental safety, which are necessary to maintain public confidence in the benefits of open economies. We reaffirm our commitment to the multilateral system and to the full respect for its rules and procedures"²⁶.

Compared to a decade before, the volume of the EU-US trade was higher than double in the 1990s, as shown in the table below:

Table.3.2.1. Transatlantic trade in goods, 1980-2000, in billions of Euros

	1980	1990	2000
EU imports from US	50,733 (18.1%)	88,957 (20.5%)	197,992 (19.3%)
EU exports to US	29,543 (14.0%)	82,004 (20.0%)	232,037 (24.7%)

Source: DG Trade, http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/pdf/bilstat/econo_usa.xls. See also M. A. Pollack, *The Political Economy of the Transatlantic Partnership*, <https://www.eui.eu/Documents/RSCAS/e-texts/200306HMTMvFReport.pdf>

Data on trade in services reveals the importance of the transatlantic trade relation, as the US accounted for about 40% of the EU's total imports and exports of services. On top of that, bilateral commerce has been largely balanced over the 1990's decade.²⁷

Table 3.2.2. Transatlantic trade in services, in billions of Euros (share of EU total)

	1998	1999	2000
EU imports from US	79,874 (36.0%)	99,042 (40.9%)	116,474 (40.7%)
EU exports to US	77,039 (33.4%)	92,199 (37.3%)	117,403 (40.3%)

Source: DG Trade, http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/pdf/bilstat/econo_usa.xls. See also M.A.Pollack, *The Political Economy of the Transatlantic Partnership*, <https://www.eui.eu/Documents/RSCAS/e-texts/200306HMTMvFReport.pdf>

In 2000, the EU was by far the largest investor in America, its almost € 795 million in FDIs accounting for 65% of the total FDIs in the US. Similarly, the US investments represented the largest share of FDI's flowing into the EU at the turning of the millennium, with about € 561 million. The continuously expanding investment relationship justifies the overall growth in transatlantic bilateral trade to a considerable extent, as an estimated 20-30% of it represents intrafirm cooperation.²⁸

²⁵ *Ibidem*.

²⁶ *Ibidem*.

²⁷ M. A. Pollack, *The Political Economy*..., p.2.

²⁸ *Ibidem*.

3.3. ANALIZING BILATERAL RELATIONS DURING THE PRODI AND BARROSO COMMISSION AND THE MANDATE OF GEORGE WALKER BUSH

Generally speaking, while the European Union-United States partnership had developed more and more until the end of the Clinton administration, the beginning of President G.W. Bush's first mandate in January 2001 was marked by a shift of orientation regarding the comprehensive transatlantic relationship.

President Bush disengaged from several international agreements, among which the Kyoto Protocol and the International Criminal Court Treaty. Equally, the EU and the US limited bi-annual bilateral summits to only one. At the first yearly EU-US Summit in Göteborg, Sweden (June 2001), the sixteen members of the European Council severely criticized the US leader. Tensions grew in the months preceding 9 /11, and the terrorist attacks marked a crucial moment in the EU-US bilateral relationship, considering their broader geopolitical effects.²⁹

Particular steps forward were nonetheless taken by launching other economic initiatives in the next Summits from 2001 onwards, among which the Positive Economic Agenda (PEA)-2002. These confirmed the comprehensive transatlantic economic relation, supported by nearly fifty individual sectors or tailored deals, institutionalized dialogues and a multi-level regulatory cooperation.

Specifically, fruitful cooperation was achieved in the realm of competition policy. Despite a number of controversies made public, the then European Commissioner responsible for antitrust and his American counterparts have forged close ties.³⁰

Launching the PEA in 2002 has marked a superior stage in the institutionalization and enlargement of the EU-US economic cooperation. The Agenda targeted specific fields where this could provide mutually beneficial results for the two parts, on short and medium term. Similar to the TEP, the PEA too focused on solving contextual impediments affecting the transatlantic business environment, by upholding the regulatory dialogues, considered to be a favorable institutional framework to engage in further negotiations and render cooperation more efficient.

As John Peterson mentioned, the informal, unofficial channels had a notable role in the overall economic relationship between the two powers. The most influential actors impacting upon EU transatlantic economic policies are American private entities, exercising structural power (through American companies as part of the EU's economic environment) and soft power leverages (by collecting, processing and disseminating information).³¹

From 2000 to 2003, EU imports from the US saw a decline in numbers, although figures display a relatively ascendant tendency when it comes to exports, as depicted in the table below:

Table 3.3.1. Transatlantic trade in goods, in billions of Euros, 2000-2004 (share of EU total)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
EU imports from US	197,992 (19.3%)	195,8 (19.0%)	175,5 (17.7%)	151,4 (15.3%)	182.4 (17.75)
EU exports to US	232,037 (24.7%)	239,9 (24.3%)	242,1 (24.3%)	221,0 (22.6%)	265.1 (27.8%)

Source: Own contribution, based on Eurostat data, [-pec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3217494/5690572/KS-CV-07-001-EN.PDF/20be419b-1b1a-4903-812f-f6d24411c923?version=1.0](http://pec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3217494/5690572/KS-CV-07-001-EN.PDF/20be419b-1b1a-4903-812f-f6d24411c923?version=1.0)

²⁹ Burghardt, *loc. cit.*, p. 15.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 13-14.

³¹ John Peterson, Maria Green, Clinton, "Europe and Economic Diplomacy: What makes the EU different?", in *Governance*, vol. 11, No. 3, July 1998.

In 2004, a new European Parliament (EP) was elected, the Barroso Commission began its first mandate and President Bush had been re-elected. Europeans and Americans rejoiced a visible opportunity to rethink the state of their relation and to impulse transatlantic dialogue in economy and foreign and security policies areas, strengthening consultative mechanisms.

A first significant step in this regard was the visit paid by the US President to EU Headquarters in Brussels on 22 February 2005. During the official meeting, priorities on the international agenda were reviewed, including global economic aspects besides the obviously ardent geopolitical and military involving crises. The EU and the US took this occasion to restate their commitment to the traditional, long-standing transatlantic partnership, “irreplaceable and vital” in the wake of new challenges.

Following the June 2005 Summit in Washington, an “EU-US Initiative to Enhance Transatlantic Economic Integration and Growth” was launched, aiming at boosting trade and investment by establishing a “High Level Regulatory Co-operation Forum” to ease regulatory cooperation. Sectors and specific issues were prioritized in the “Roadmap for Regulatory Cooperation”, reinforcing the Lisbon Strategy.

On 18 October 2005, President José Barroso was invited to the White House – a novelty in many years for a Head of the EU Commission -, a conciliatory political initiative. Discussions encompassed topics like the WTO Doha Round, transatlantic economy and the worldwide promotion of democracy.

Summarizing, 2005 had revealed systematic efforts to change the bilateral rhetoric, discouraging polarization and appealing to universal common values, an indispensable condition to revive the transatlantic agenda. The most significant progress has been registered in the field of economic cooperation. Based on commitments made at the June EU-US Summit in Washington, on 30 November 2005, the EU hosted the first informal EU-US Economic Ministerial meeting.³²

Transatlantic trading prospects saw a positive evolution throughout the years, but they were visibly disturbed by the upcoming economic crisis. The following table describes the evolution of imports and exports, between 2004 and 2009.

3.4. THE GREAT RECESSION, THE EUROZONE CRISIS AND THE OBAMA ERA³³

Polls³⁴ have shown that Europeans’ perception (mainly in Western Europe) of the American partner under the Obama administration was relatively favorable and even more positive than in President Bush’s years. This was partly due to the new leader’s popularity and there was growing hope for a new political space for a constructive transatlantic cooperation.³⁵

³² Burghardt, *loc. cit.*, pp. 18-19.

³³ Part of this subchapter has been previously published, in a slightly revised form, in a single-authored article in *CES Working Papers* – Volume XI, Issue 4, Iași, 2020, with the title “Contemporary patterns of transatlantic trade cooperation in a post-Brexit European Union (dis)order”, http://www.ceswp.uaic.ro/articles/CESWP2019_XI4_GHI.pdf.

³⁴ GMFUS, *Transatlantic Trends-Key findings 2009*, https://www.gmfus.org/sites/default/files/publications/pdf/2009_English_Key.pdf, accessed May 7, 2020.

“Transatlantic Trends is a comprehensive annual survey of American and European public opinion, a project of the GMFUS and the Compagnia di San Paolo”.

³⁵ *Ibidem*.

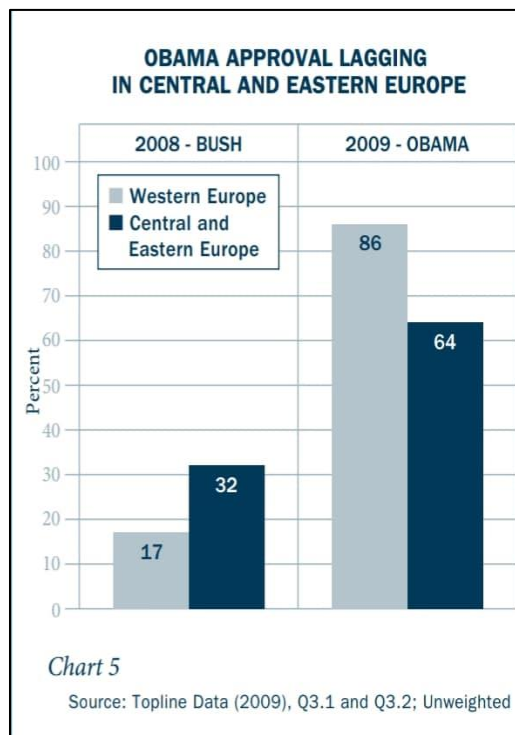


Fig. 3.4.1. Obama approval lagging in Central and Eastern Europe
Source: Topline data (2009)

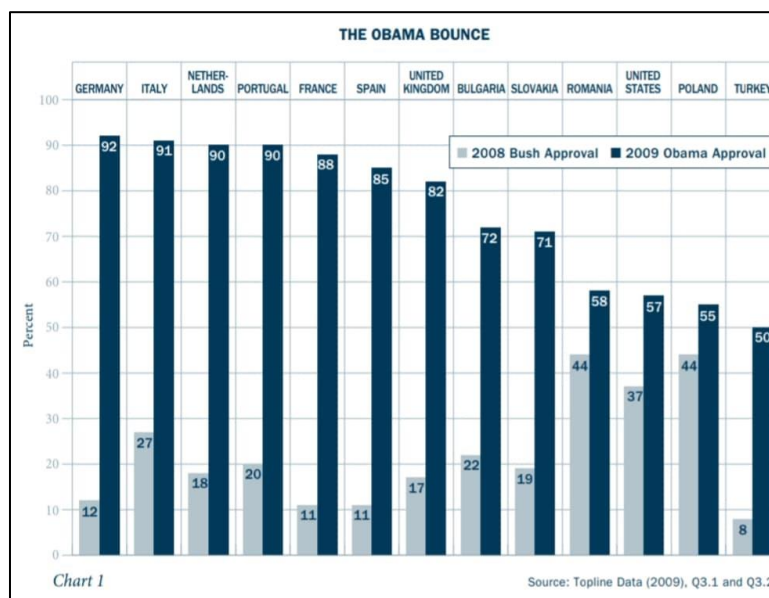


Fig. 3.4.2. The Obama Bounce
Source: Topline data (2009)

However, there were also voices pointing to the particular challenges that could affect the overall EU-US relation in the medium and long-term. One of these challenges was, of course, the widespread crisis that hit the global economy starting with 2008.

US President Barack Hussein Obama's first term in office coincided with an ascendant curve of the economic recession in the EU, following the financial crisis of 2007-2008 (denominated "subprime mortgage crisis") in the US, as housing prices started to drop in early 2006, causing real difficulties for borrowers to

refinance their loans. The global Great Recession during the late 2000s was the most severe economic and financial crisis after the Great Interwar Depression of the 1930s.

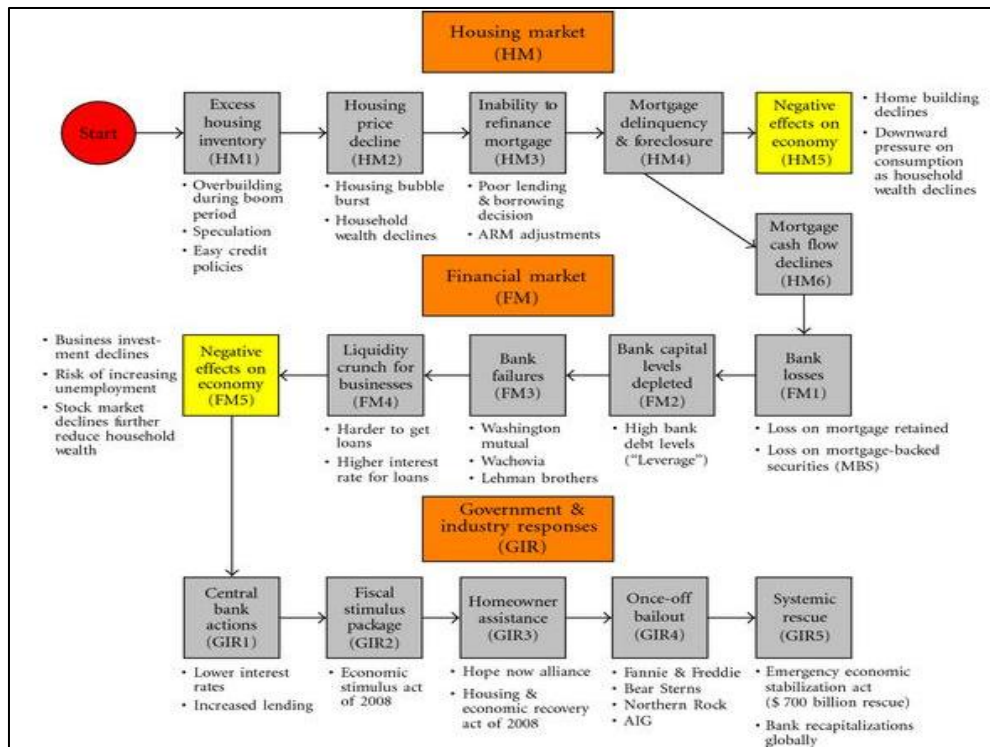


Fig. 3.4.3. Diagrammatic overview of the subprime mortgage crisis

Source: C. Fouche & Mukuddem-Petersen, Janine & Petersen, M. & Senosi, M., https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Diagrammatic-overview-of-the-subprime-mortgage-crisis-compare-51_fig6_26589454

The Community Reinvestment Act (June 1977) has been blamed for pushing banks to make investments in subprime areas, but the underlying trigger of the crisis could have been in fact the Commodity Futures Modernization Act (2000), allowing banks to trade profitable derivatives, selling them to investors.³⁶ Mortgage-backed securities required collateral home loans and the derivatives stimulated demand for more and more mortgages.

President Obama took measures to alleviate the negative effects of the recession, to boost economic growth and restore trust in the financial services industry. After President George W. Bush's 2008 plan, the Troubled Asset Recovery Program, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 was adopted. Allocating an amount of \$224 billion, the plan was designed to support families, infrastructure, alternative energy, medical care, education, small enterprises, R&D in the scientific field.³⁷ ARRA was responsible for creating new jobs, with an investment of \$275 billion in federal contracts, grants, and loans.³⁸

³⁶ SEC, *Commodity Futures Modernization Act of 2000*, p. 7, <https://www.sec.gov/about/laws/cfma.pdf>, accessed May 5, 2020.

³⁷ Kimberly Amadeo, *ARRA, Its Details, With Pros and Cons*, April 11, 2020, <https://www.thebalance.com/arra-details-3306299>, accessed May 5, 2020.

³⁸ Congressional Budget Office, *Estimated Impact of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act on Employment and Economic Output in 2014*, <http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/114th-congress-2015-2016/reports/49958-ARRA.pdf>, accessed March 5, 2020.

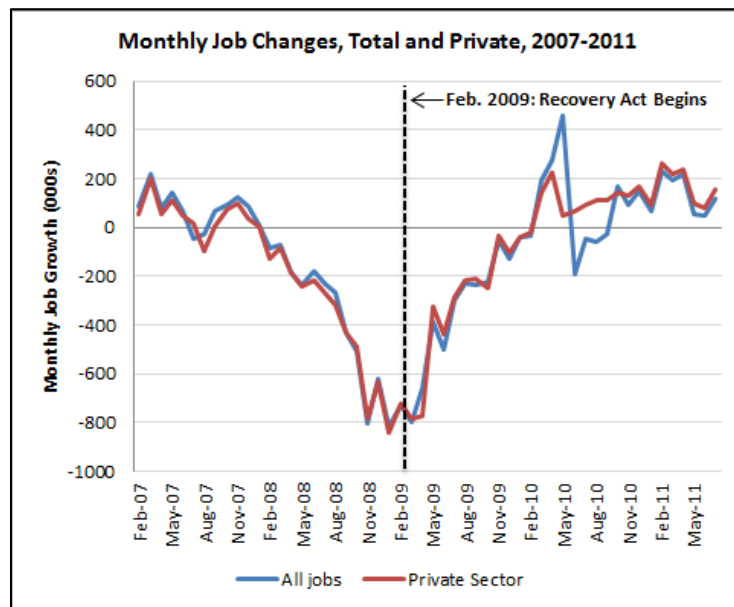


Fig.3.4.4. Monthly Job Changes in the US, Total and Private, 2007-2011

Source: *The Atlantic*, http://jaredbernsteinblog.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/gdp_recov.png

In April 2006, President Obama's administration launched the Making Homes Affordable Program, designed to help homeowners avoiding expropriation and stimulating the housing market by allowing many people to refinance, in the context of lower mortgage rates. This was possible in the framework of the Homeowner Affordable Refinance Program, part of the afore-mentioned broader programme. By 2016, it had supported more than 3.3 million people.³⁹

In the EU, the international financial crisis has seriously harmed national economies, mostly those of member states in the South.⁴⁰ The recession was deemed to be one of the most severe in the history of European integration.

Incentivized by a low interest rate adopted by the European Central Bank (ECB), investors in the Northern part of the Eurozone openly offered their loans (mainly targeted to the expanding housing market) to the South, which in return was stimulated to borrow. This, in time, has led to deficits in Southern countries of the EU, primarily by private economic actors. Driven by unbalanced capital flows - as a result of lacking coordinated fiscal policies in the Eurozone area -, the spiral went upwards, ending up in the same form of a housing bubble as in the US and the collapse of other asset prices.

Because of the negative evolution of the events, the private debt crisis converted into a sovereign debt crisis, as national governments in various EU countries assumed large parts of their banking sector bad debts. Consequently, a growing public debt exposed the country to a sovereign credit risk, weakening the financial system.⁴¹

Taking place in the unique and centralized setting of the European Monetary Union (completed in the late 1990s), with tightly interdependent states sharing a common currency, the economic crisis was sided by constraints to available EU policy options as well as by political disputes about sharing the burden of adjustment between creditor and debtor states. Unlike in the US, the Eurozone debt crisis was countered with

³⁹ Kimberly Amadeo, *2009 Financial Crisis Explanation with Timeline*, May 2, 2020, <https://www.thebalance.com/2009-financial-crisis-bailouts-3305539>, accessed May 5, 2020.

⁴⁰ CSO, *Quarterly National Accounts -Quarter 4 2012(PDF)*, 21 March 2013, https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/releasespublications/documents/latestheadlinefigures/qna_q42012.pdf, accessed May 5, 2020.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

huge bailout programs from the ECB, the IMF or other Eurozone countries, combined with strong austerity measures (including spending cuts and tax increases)⁴².

Comparing and contrasting the financial environment in the EU and the US, Jean-Claude Trichet, President of the ECB, mentioned in 2009 that “our response to the crisis has been carefully calibrated to the financial and economic structures of the euro area. In particular, we needed to bear in mind that the euro area’s financial system is predominantly bank-based. By comparison, (...) the US financial system is primarily market-based”⁴³.

A “global New Deal”, as coined by former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, involving a concerted EU-US joint action plan to recover the global economy from the Great Recession⁴⁴ has met contradictory positions in the EU decision-making circles. Mirek Topolánek, former President of the EU Council of Ministers, addressing the EP in 2009 referred to Barack Obama administration’s programme as a “road to hell”⁴⁵, contradicting Brown’s views expressed during his encounter with the American president a month before the G20 Summit in London, 2009.

Topolánek warned EU leaders about the Obama’s massive stimulus programmes, amounting to almost \$1tn, risking a destabilization of global financial markets. “The US treasury secretary talks about permanent action and we at our [EU summit] were quite alarmed by that. He talks about an extensive US stimulus campaign. All of these steps are the road to hell”⁴⁶.

On 9 May 2010, the EU members signed the Framework Agreement on the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF), a temporary legal instrument necessary that has assisted Ireland, Portugal and Greece, issuing bonds and other debt instruments on capital markets.

Proposing the introduction of a Commission-Council procedure to better monitor the national budgetary policies of EU members under the Excessive Deficit Procedure (EDP)⁴⁷, in his 2011 speech, Commission President, José Manuel Durão Barroso was invoking the necessity of a “comprehensive response”⁴⁸ to the recession, in order to “chart Europe’s way out of the economic crisis”⁴⁹. He outlined five areas of policy action “designed to break the vicious circle between doubts over the sustainability of sovereign debt, the stability of the banking system and the European Union’s growth prospects”⁵⁰.

Alongside with the latest tranche of bailout funds designed to sustain the Greek economy through the process of economic recovery, President Barroso called for implementing agreed measures to increase the EFSF to 440bn euros and accelerate the launching of the European Stability Mechanism (ESM).⁵¹ The EFSF

⁴² Jeffry Frieden, Stefanie Walter, “Understanding the Political Economy of the Eurozone Crisis”, in *Annual Review of Political Science*, vol. 20, May 2017, p. 372, <https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/pdf/10.1146/annurev-polisci-051215-023101>, accessed May 5, 2020.

⁴³ Jean-Claude Trichet, *The financial crisis and the response of the ECB*, Sofia, 12 June 2009, <https://www.ecb.europa.eu/press/key/date/2009/html/sp090612.en.html>, accessed May 6, 2020.

⁴⁴ *Obama, Brown Stress Need for Global Unity in Fighting Economic Crisis*, March 3, 2009, <https://www.dw.com/en/obama-brown-stress-need-for-global-unity-in-fighting-economic-crisis/a-4069210>, accessed May 8, 2020.

⁴⁵ Ian Traynor, *Obama’s rescue plan is ‘road to hell’*, claims EU president, March 25, 2009, <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2009/mar/25/obama-rescue-eu-criticism>, accessed May 8, 2020.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁷ The Maastricht Treaty envisaged the creation of the Euro. It provided the guidelines for multilateral fiscal surveillance within the EU. The consolidated version of the TFEU (2012) outlined the requirements about the EDP. Monitoring entitled under the EDP conditions is launched by the European Commission against any EU country exceeding the budgetary deficit ceiling imposed by the Stability and growth pact. (see *Manual on Government Deficit and Debt*, p. 3, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3859598/7203647/KS-GQ-16-001-EN-N.pdf/5cfae6dd-29d8-4487-80ac-37f76cd1f012>).

⁴⁸ Robert Peston, *Barroso outlines plan to resolve eurozone debt crisis*, October 21, 2011, <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-15279017>, accessed May 6, 2020.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*.

continued to provide financial support for the existing debt until all the beneficiary countries repaid their loans. For 2019, the EFSF's long-term funding target was €22.5 billion.⁵²

Reinforcing Jean-Claude Trichet's argument, coordination on consolidating Europe's banks was another vital point on the EU's agenda, as raised by the Head of EU Commission. Financial institutions were invited to set aside additional assets covering losses through private funding or national governments as needed. Barroso also appealed to the imperative of stimulating growth and stability policies and to deeper economic governance integration in the Eurozone area.⁵³

Members of the US Congress have voiced concern about the effect that economic context in the EU might have for the US and global economies, impacting considerably on the future transatlantic relation.

Hon. Jeanne Shaheen stated in the US Senate in a 2011-speech on the EU debt crisis' implications: "In today's global economy, Europe is by far America's most critical ally. Europe is the United States largest trading partner and our biggest export market. (...) This crisis presents one of the most complex challenges to European stability since the creation of the European Union and the outcome will have lasting effects for the United States and our transatlantic partnership for decades to come. (...) what happens in Europe can have significant repercussions for the American economy"⁵⁴.

With the same occasion, Hon. John Barrasso, U.S. senator from Wyoming added: "I believe that the problem in Europe could have a significant and substantial effect on the United States. The United States and Europe have the largest trade and investment relationship in the world. An estimated 15 million jobs in the United States and Europe are a result of the transatlantic economic activity. Based on these strong economic ties, the problems facing the Eurozone can create significant risks to the United States economy, to transatlantic trade and economic growth around the world. We must clearly identify these risks and work together to limit the fallout from this crisis here at home. In addition, the United States should be learning from the crisis taking place in Europe. Due to the increasingly interconnected nature of the global economy, it is clear that unsustainable government debt levels can lead not only to a single sovereign default but it can also produce a widespread global financial crisis"⁵⁵.

Despite the policy measures taken by EU leaders, European countries affected by the crisis have recovered in a slower pace compared to the situation in the US, as shown in the next figure. The American economy recovered much rapidly, as stock prices and GDP reached their pre-crisis levels by late-2011, while the Eurozone only in 2015.

⁵² European Financial Stability Facility Société Anonyme, Financial Statements, Management Report and Auditor's Report, 31 December 2018, https://www.esm.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2019-06-26_efsfs_2018.pdf, accessed May 11, 2020.

⁵³ Robert Peston, *loc.cit.*

⁵⁴ US Government Publishing Office, The European debt crisis: strategic implications for the transatlantic alliance, *Prepared Statement of Hon. Jeanne Shaheen*, November 2, 2011, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-112shrg72398/html/CHRG-112shrg72398.htm>, accessed May 7, 2020.

⁵⁵ US Government Publishing Office, The European debt crisis: strategic implications for the transatlantic alliance, *OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN BARRASSO, U.S. SENATOR FROM WYOMING*, November 2, 2011, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-112shrg72398/html/CHRG-112shrg72398.htm>, accessed May 7, 2020.

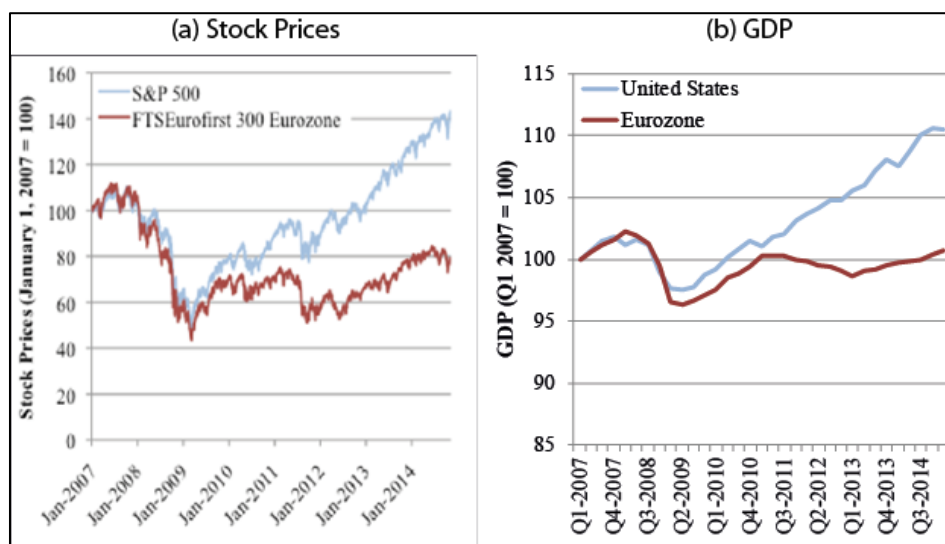


Fig.3.4.5. Stock and GDP price movement

Source: VoxEU.org – The Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR), <https://voxeu.org/article/ecb-and-fed-comparative-narrative>

Another particular point of dissent in EU-US trade relations was the represented by the controversial TTIP. Negotiations began in July 2013, and it was deemed to turn into the most ambitious free trade agreement so far, with benefits for many consumers on both sides of the Atlantic. TTIP was aimed at removing barriers of technical and non-tariff nature, aligning standards and legislative regulations, and thus enabling transatlantic trade cooperation.

According to the CEPR analysis, the EU economy could have been boosted by TTIP with approximately €120 billion, equivalent to 0.5% of GDP, and the US economy with €95 billion, equivalent to 0.4% of GDP.⁵⁶

A Caixa Bank assessment, based on CEPR 2013 predictions, presents the economic impact of the TTIP on GDP as considerable. The CEPR study has modeled global trade up to 2027 by providing different scenarios to reduce trade impediments between the EU and US, as the figure below shows. The best-case scenario supported that TTIP could generate a continual GDP increase of 0.48% in the EU and 0.39% in the US. This average outcome would mean a yearly growth in net income per household of 545 Euros in Europe and 655 Euros in the USA. A sectorial analysis showed that most of this GDP increase would come as a result of reducing non-tariff barriers, particularly regarding trade in goods⁵⁷. The assessment, however, underlined that, “while the positive net benefits are spread among most of the population, the costs are concentrated in certain groups of individuals who are negatively affected by the treaty, which is why they reject it and are pressurizing against it”⁵⁸.

⁵⁶ European Commission MEMO, *Independent study outlines benefits of EU-US trade agreement*, March 12, 2013, Brussels, file:///D:/Downloads/Independent_study_outlines_benefits_of_EU-US_trade_agreement.pdf, accessed May 8, 2020. See Iulia-Anamaria Ghidui, “Contemporary patterns of transatlantic trade cooperation in a post-Brexit European Union (dis)order”, in *CES Working Papers* – Volume XI, Issue 4, Iași, 2020, http://www.ceswp.uaic.ro/articles/CESWP2019_XI4_GHI.pdf.

⁵⁷ Josep Mestres Domènech, *The economic impact of the TTIP*, June 9, 2015, <https://www.caixabankresearch.com/node/27159>, accessed May 8, 2020.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*.

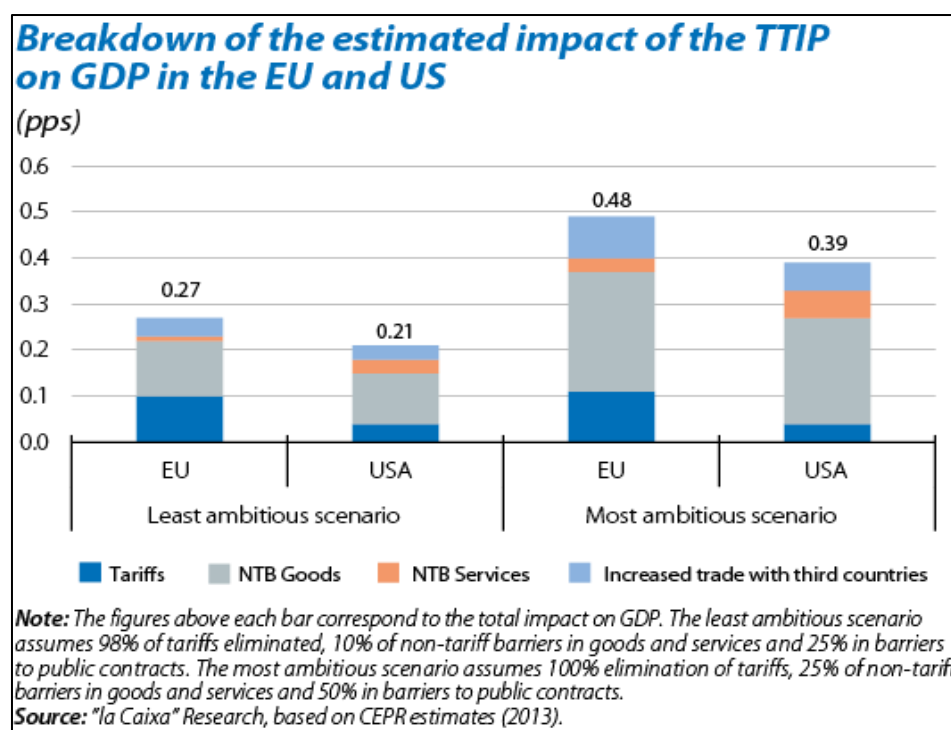


Fig. 3.4.6. Breakdown of the estimated impact of the TTIP on GDP in the EU and US

Source: la "Caixa" Research, <https://www.caixabankresearch.com/node/27159>

The TTIP debate has unveiled specific counter arguments against, especially in the NGO sector. The most frequently invoked risks were related to: toxic chemicals exposure, GMO contamination, legal terms permitting multinationals to take legal action European countries, the Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS), reciprocally accepting authorizations over the quality of traded goods (meaning the Europeans would have had to accept lower North–American standards), and the lack of transparency as most of the negotiations were conducted privately.

Cecilia Malmström, EU Trade Commissioner and Chief negotiator for TTIP at that time, stressed that an eventual accord will maintain the EU's regulation for consumer and environment protection, as well as its GMO legislation.

Delivering a speech at a conference in Brussels, on May 24, 2016, Commissioner Malmström presented the benefits of TTIP for the European business sector, reassuring that it would bring future prosperity, in a European Union of values.

The following infographic summarizes the pros and cons of TTIP, some of them aforementioned in our research.

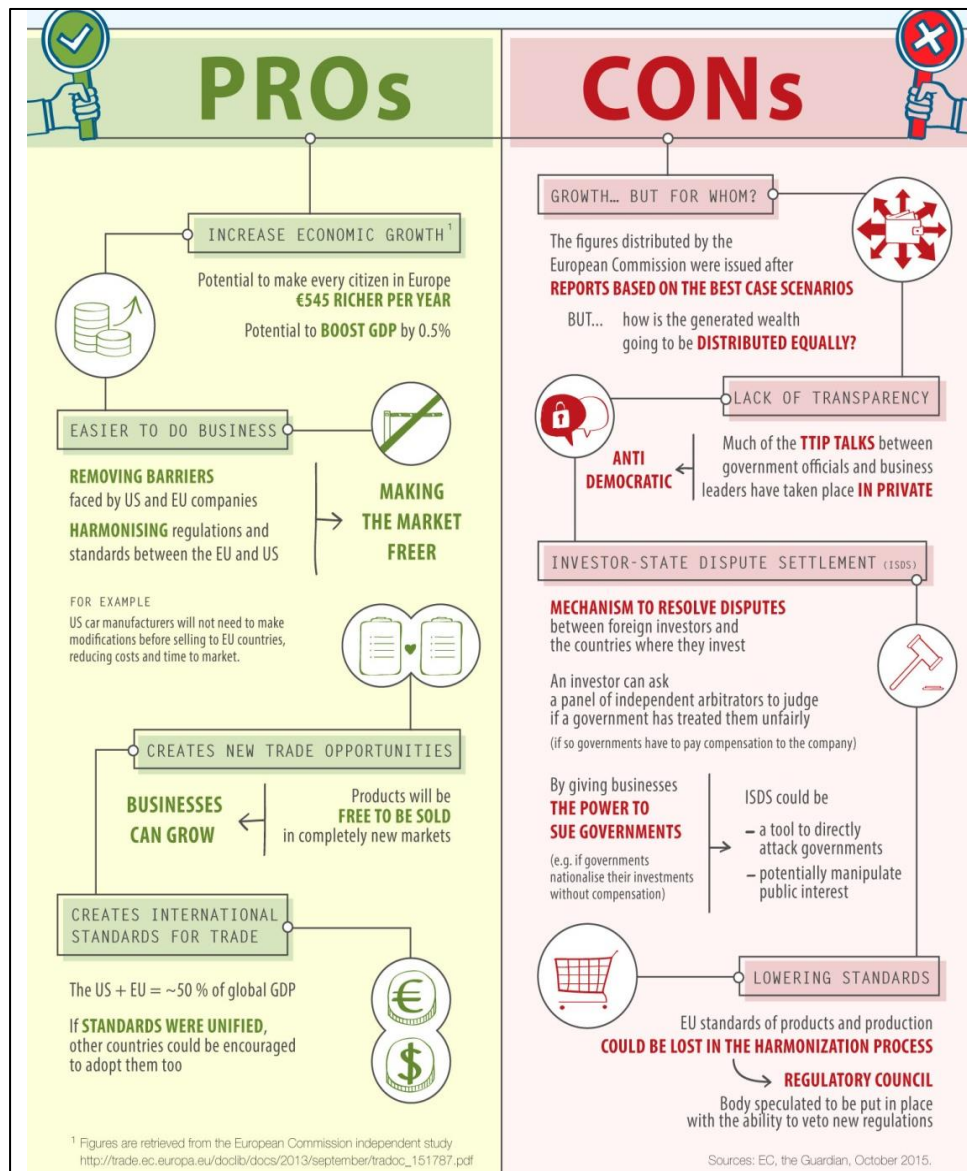


Fig. 3.4.7. Pros and Cons of TTIP, a 2015 assessment

Source: European Commission, The Guardian,

<https://www.debatingeurope.eu/2015/10/14/ttip-negotiations-secretive/#.Xx6Qq9IzaUk>

The EU Trade Commissioner was quite optimistic about a possible conclusion of the TTIP negotiations by the end of 2016. Restrained by US tariffs, Brussels will have later decided that talks can be legally postponed provided the American side will not have cancelled steel and aluminum duties prior to the conclusion of negotiations or if the US will further take new actions against the EU under permissive provisions in the US legislation.

Addressing the already mentioned issue of transparency, more recent EU Directives for bilateral trade negotiations mention “the Commission, in cooperation with Member States, shall, throughout the negotiations, ensure appropriate communication, based on the principle of transparency, towards all relevant EU stakeholders, including civil society and economic operators”⁵⁹.

⁵⁹ Permanent Representatives Committee, *DIRECTIVES FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA FOR AN AGREEMENT ON CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT*, April 9, 2019, Brussels, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39179/st06053-ad01-en19.pdf>, accessed May 8, 2020.

TTIP has determined political calculations for Europeans and Americans alike. The potential capacity to stimulate economic recovery and growth, the opportunity to draw the new world trade rules, were seen as mutual benefits for the parties by TTIP advocates.

For better or for worse, the long-debated TTIP will be put on the back burner and finally renounced, as the Trump administration will have brought a completely new paradigm to transatlantic relations, including the economic dimension. We believe lessons can be learned from the Comprehensive and Economic Trade Agreement (CETA), though, as it is an example of how parts managed to compromise on important aspects like national governments regulatory mechanisms, the preservation of EU standards or the protection of humans and the environment.

The infographic below offers an overview of the expected negotiation results.



Fig. 3.4.8. CETA in 60 seconds

Source: European Commission, https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/in-focus/ceta/index_en.htm

3.5. A SHIFT OF PARADIGM ⁶⁰

Representing half of total global personal consumption, generating 16 million jobs for the Euro-Atlantic community and representing 1/3 of global GDP (in terms of parity purchasing power), EU-US trade continue to preserve them as the two most integrated regions in the world, a US Chamber of Commerce Transatlantic Economy 2020 report shows.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Part of this subchapter has been previously published, in a slightly revised form, in a single-authored article in *CES Working Papers* – Volume XI, Issue 4, Iași, 2020, with the title “Contemporary patterns of transatlantic trade cooperation in a post-Brexit European Union (dis)order”, http://www.ceswp.uaic.ro/articles/CESWP2019_XI4_GHI.pdf.

⁶¹ US Chamber of Commerce, *THE TRANSATLANTIC ECONOMY 2020*, https://www.uschamber.com/sites/default/files/te2020_keyfindings_final_1.pdf, accessed May 11, 2020.

Table 3.5.1. Investment, trade in goods and services

EU goods imports from the US	\$337 billion (2019)
U.S. goods imports from the EU	\$515 billion (2019)
EU services to the US	\$236 billion (2018)
US services to the EU	\$312 billion (2018)

Source: Own contribution, based on US Chamber of Commerce 2020 data

However, the European Union experiences many internal challenges ranging from populism, Euroscepticism, nationalist or protectionist tendencies to the accommodation of the Brexit result, and now, the global impact of the coronavirus pandemic, severely affecting member countries to varying degrees of complexity.

Former President Trump has reconfigured the evolution of the Euro-Atlantic strategic partnership, introducing a renewed, debatable model of thinking. Isolationist and protectionist policies (for the purpose to „Make America great again”) forced him into a risky venture in US foreign relations with the EU.

Theoretical debates on international affairs distinguish between interdependence theorists and (neo) realism supporters, questioning whether or not transatlantic economic interconnection is a warrant for peace, stability and security over the broader, strategic relationship. The former argued there is a correlation between interdependence and peace, while the latter dismissed this theory.⁶²

Hypothetically considering that unsolved political crises could eventually erode the consolidation of the overall transatlantic security community, dragging it into a serious breakdown, rather than a war and peace scenario, Jens van Scherpenberg believes that the economic and commercial partnership would not suffice to rescue the situation.⁶³ Nevertheless, the current paradigm in transatlantic relations also puts the question in reverse form. Doubts were cast upon traditional security arrangements – regarding, for instance, the burden sharing principle-, triggered by the US President’s repeated allegations that NATO became “obsolete” and that all the Allies must allocate 2% from their national budget for defense in order to apply uniformly the Article 5.

Donald Trump was suspecting the European allies are actually benefiting from the US, and not eager to cooperate fairly. He labeled the EU a “foe”, instead of a partner, for America.

Thus, political and security factors can also impact upon economic prospects and the conclusion applies to the strategic transatlantic partnership. The US’ retreat from some international forums and trade agreements has determined the EU countries question the stake of the transatlantic partnership.

Reckoning the biggest and deepest commercial and investment relationship between the US and the EU at global scale, their strongly integrated economies, and the potential to improve this relation, the Council of the EU has presented its decision to start negotiations with the US for an accord to eliminate tariffs for industrial commodities, nevertheless pursuing a more limited agreement and excluding agricultural products from the talks. This was influenced by the US’ announcement on withdrawing from the Paris Agreement, which made it difficult for the European Union to negotiate “deep and comprehensive free trade agreements”.

As new trade talks were launched, they were probably doomed from their very inception, some argue, partly because the U.S. won’t be satisfied with a restricted trade arrangement eliminating agricultural products, and the EU, willing to protect its farmers and food quality standards, would presumably dismiss it, had the US kept unchanged its lower standards. “The United States has made it clear to the EU on many occasions that a

⁶² Waltz, Kenneth N., *Theory of International Politics*, Boston, McGraw-Hill, 1979; Thomas Risse, “Determinants and features of international alliances and structural partnerships”, *Transworld Working Papers*, No.2, September 2012, <http://www.transworld-fp7.eu/?p=661>, accessed May 11, 2020.

⁶³ Jens van Scherpenberg, “Trade is no superglue”, in J. Anderson, G. J. Ikenberry, & T. Risse (Eds.), *The end of the West? Crisis and change in the Atlantic order*, 2008, pp. 127–156.

trade agreement between the United States and the EU needs to include agriculture if the agreement is to get support in Congress”⁶⁴, in the own words of a U.S. Trade Representative.

In the EU, France was opposing such a complex agreement. It did so as it has conventionally supported the impossibility to restart the TTIP talks because of threatening tariff barriers in place (the two sides struggling to counterbalance each other as Brussels has also imposed specific commercial restrictions) and as President Trump despised the Paris Agreement.

Germany wanted the EU to make the first step, proposing a new free trade offer that would facilitate the beginning of the talks. Representatives of the German business environment emphasized “the United States is the most important export destination for the German economy. Continued trade tensions not only endanger trade flows but jobs in Germany and the U.S. Many German companies...have invested in the U.S. and employ around 850,000 people there. That is why the trade talks are an important step”⁶⁵.

Wilbur Ross, the United States Secretary of Commerce, firstly supported reopening channels for TTIP negotiations. But the European Commission’s stance was totally against as it did not shift away from the intention to negotiate precisely on industrial goods.

In July 2018, Jean Claude Juncker and Donald Trump have prospected about a free-trade agreement covering non-auto “industrial goods”⁶⁶, but not agricultural products. The leaders announced “the launch of a new phase in the relationship between the United States and the European Union – a phase of close friendship, of strong trade relations in which both of us will win, of working better together for global security and prosperity, and of fighting jointly against terrorism”⁶⁷.

Still advocating for the European citizens’ food safety, Malmström upheld the idea to renew the US-EU trade arrangement concentrating strictly on industrial commodities. To rebuild confidence in bilateral transatlantic relations, leaders must focus on ending the trade dispute, she stated: “There is a lack of trust at this moment and that is why we’re proposing instead of increasing tensions between us, instead of having these tariffs, instead of saying that Europe is a security threat to the American economy, OK let’s rebuild that trust. If we start with industrial goods, which is much less complicated and which will be beneficial for both sides, we maybe can rebuild that trust”⁶⁸.

A potential decision on the US side to impose a 25 % tariff on imported automobiles components for up to six months while concealing reports has also disincentivized Europeans. Commissioner’s determination to do its utmost to finalize talks under the Juncker Commission (expiring October 2019) was an idealistic target, as little progress has been recorded following the dismissal of TTIP.

Invoking the national security interest, the US as lead by Donald Trump has gradually became a “trade warrior”, conflicting with countries like China, Mexico, Canada or the EU. Car quotas were put in place for Canada and Mexico, along with the duties on European steel and aluminum items (extended in January 2020). The EU counter reacted, with tariffs on specific American products. Removing these mutual tariffs would certainly speed up the negotiations.

Members of the European Parliament did not back Commission’s mandate to negotiate a new framework for transatlantic trade, concerned with sensitive issues like farming, on which the US might hardly cede. Also, previous controversies around the TTIP were brought to light by the legislative in the new context.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ David Meyer, *Why the new US-EU trade talks may be doomed before they even start*, Fortune, March 9, 2019, <http://fortune.com/2019/05/07/us-eu-trade-talks-agriculture/>, accessed May 11, 2020.

⁶⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁶ European Commission, *Joint EU-US Statement following President Juncker’s visit to the White House*, June 25, 2018, <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=1898>, accessed May 11, 2020.

⁶⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁸ James Politi, Malmstrom says “lack of trust” hampers EU-US trade talks, March 9, 2019, <https://www.ft.com/content/1f8ff2c4-4104-11e9-b896-fe36ec32aece>, accessed May 11, 2020.

⁶⁹ M. Koleva, *EU-US trade talks mandate fails*, March 15, 2019, <https://europost.eu/en/a/view/eu-us-trade-talks-mandate-fails-24880>, accessed May 11, 2020.

Warning he will withdraw his country from the global trading architecture of the World Trade Organization, President Donald Trump became less and less popular in the EU. On March 2018, at a press conference, President Emanuel Macron reaffirmed Europe's preference for multilateralism and reassured that the Union will respond duly to trade disputes.

More recently, Phil Hogan, former EU Trade Commissioner, referring to the narrative in which the EU is seen as a threat to American national interest (or security), a harmful discourse for transatlantic relations, said that "we reject the U.S. labeling the E.U. as a security risk in order to justify the imposition of tariffs"⁷⁰ as "the narrative is hurtful to our European people"⁷¹.

After months of longstanding tensions, the old transatlantic partners proved willing to conclude a deal as soon as possible, covering trade, technology and energy, as Ursula von der Leyen declared with the occasion of her bilateral meeting with the US President in January 2020. Trump affirmed his hope too, nevertheless reiterating the validity of punishing levies on the European automotive sector.

However, the EU and the US' rapprochement to China adds another troubling dimension to a potential transatlantic trade pact in the medium future. Much to the Europeans' unrest, Washington has managed to secure the first phase of the 2020 Economic and Trade Agreement deal with China, although not cancelling many of the previously imposed tariffs on Chinese goods.

Even though the former European Commission impressed by labeling China "a strategic competitor" or "a systemic rival", the EU executive led by Ursula von der Leyen has revealed a different geopolitical paradigm, much less confrontational. Nonetheless, a common EU strategy towards Beijing remains a challenging enterprise.

A landmark in EU-Chinese bilateralism remains, undoubtedly, the Belt and Road Initiative, launched in 2013, a Beijing-made initiative to attract partners all over the world in an complex infrastructure investment program, paving the route for the new SILK ROAD diplomacy (or the corridor denominated The New Eurasian Land Bridge-connecting Western China to Western Russia-, for our particular discussion). EU countries joined the strategic initiative (embracing the "16+1" offer), signing bilateral, BRI-related cooperation agreements, and EU-based financial institutions like ERBD or EIB and European companies (see DHL, Siemens) followed suit.⁷²

Individual EU member states' position towards China has suffered a visible shift of paradigm, notwithstanding national controversies in "internal opposing camps" (see, for instance, Germany's and UK's tendency to embrace the next-generation technology developed by telecommunications giant Huawei, or former German Chancellor Angela Merkel's hardcore optimism about the EU and China concluding a comprehensive investment agreement in time for the bilateral summit in Leipzig, September 2020).⁷³

The EU-US bilateral commercial relation is, therefore, losing ground in front of a new configuration of global geopolitical and geo-economic interactions, where China (and maybe not only) manages to impose itself more and more as an emerging global actor, gaining credibility and an increasing rate of commercial and high-technology success amidst European and American strategic partners. China was an attraction for both but, at the same time, it can overpass the two's status on the world economic scene, if too much influence is being credited in the form of (apparently harmless or mutually beneficial) Chinese investments in Europe and the US.

⁷⁰ Phil Hogan, *Refreshing Transatlantic Trade Relations*, January 16, 2020, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/refreshing-transatlantic-trade-relations>, accessed May 10, 2020.

⁷¹ *Ibidem*.

⁷² A. Skala-Kuhmann, "European Responses to BRI, An overdue assessment", in *Horizons-Journal of International Relations and Sustainable Development*, No. 14/2019, p. 150.

⁷³ N. Barkin, "Europe's moment of truth with China. 6 factors that will shape the Continent's relationship with Beijing in 2020", in *Politico*, January 13, 2020, <https://www.politico.eu/article/europes-moment-of-truth-with-china-trade-eu/>, accessed March 13, 2020.

In terms of goods trading, we can observe that, in 2018, even if the US remained the primary source of EU exports (€406 billion), American exports to the EU (€267 billion) were almost €100 billion less than Chinese ones (€394 billion), as detailed in the next figure. This feature was maintained in 2019 as well, with the EU China as having its primary import country (19%), while the US fell on the second place. EU's exports in 2019 went mostly to the US, whereas China was the third largest beneficiary, after the United Kingdom.

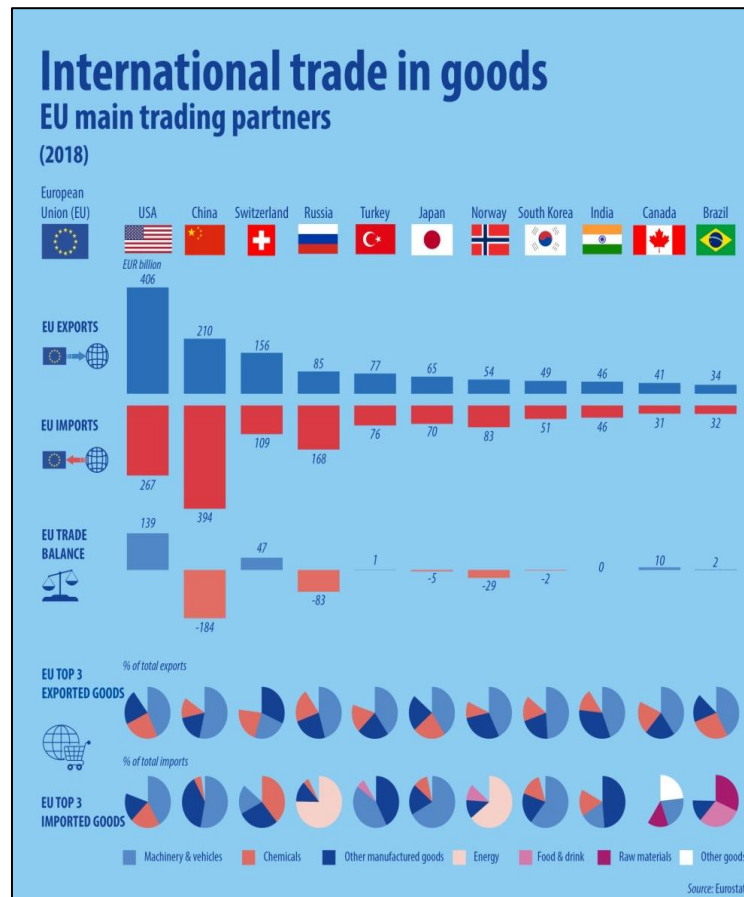


Fig.3.5.1. International trade in goods, EU main trading partners (2018)

Source: Eurostat, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Int_trade_2018_data.jpg

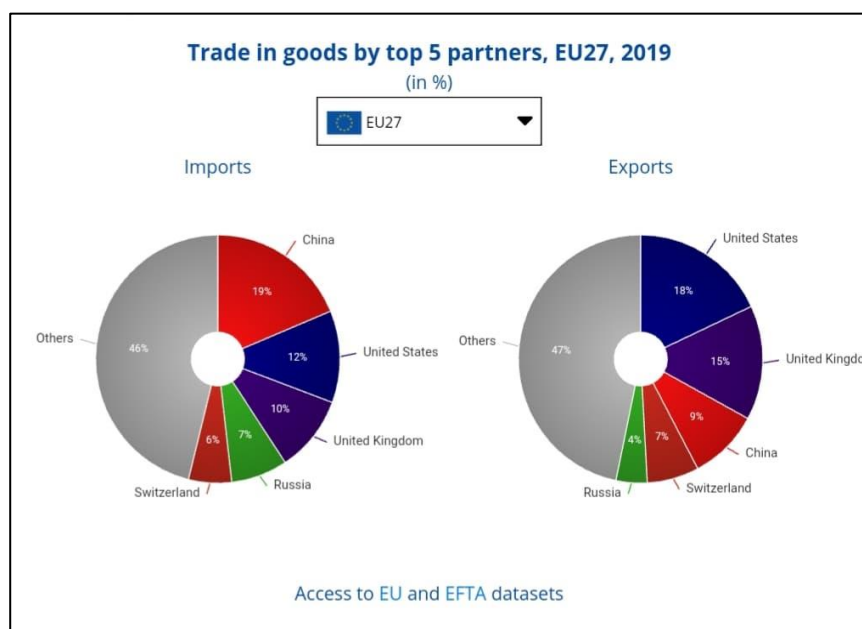


Fig.3.5.2. Trade in goods by top 5 partners, EU27, 2019

Source: Eurostat, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Extra-EU_trade_in_good

The coronavirus pandemic then changed the perspective dramatically, as China lost credit in its partners' eyes. In the midst of the turmoil, President Donald Trump referred to a "Chinese virus", much to the Asians' discontent, though he clarified it was not a racist terminology, but simply denominating the place where the pandemic burst.

Predictions about the economic impact of the global biological crisis drew attention to consequences on transatlantic trade as well. While some policy-makers thought of the alternative of reshoring (for example, regarding the pharmaceutical production), largest industry associations called for export restrictions to be lifted, in order to "minimize disruptions to global value chains and refrain from unnecessary new regulations and trade barriers"⁷⁴.

From a pessimistic perspective, apart from allegations about EU and US firms not relying anymore on Chinese production facilities, "decoupling" might have been the term describing the tendency of the transatlantic economy, experts like Kirk Samson opinionated, given the US continued to play hard on issues where the EU cannot compromise, such as privacy or competition policy. In the pandemic crisis context, this tendency was feared as potentially intensifying, along with deeper isolationism, as businesses experienced how exposed are their geographically dispersed structures to uncontrollable political and biological risks. Global companies and particularly Euro-Atlantic businesses needed to face these risks, possibly by splitting management and production structures into relatively independent units operating on the two sides, adapting to the new market conditions.⁷⁵

The US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer briefed in March 2020 that "President Trump will continue to rebalance America's trade relationships to benefit American workers, aggressively enforce U.S. trade laws, and take prompt action in response to unfair trade practices by other nations"⁷⁶.

In strained times like the ones of the coronavirus crisis, EU representatives advocated for the core importance of open trade policies and supply chains, instead of a tit-for-that tariff battle, although they seemed ready to react to new US duties with similar policies targeting specific American goods. "In order to assist the recovery, we (n.n. the EU) expect our partners to remove any unlawful duties in place, including those on steel and aluminum"⁷⁷, an EU Commission spokesperson said on April 2020.

German Economy Minister Peter Altmaier argued that trade policy must be particularly considered in fighting the economic effects of the pandemic crisis: "that's why we should work together ... and avoid tensions and obstacles to world trade"⁷⁸.

In the prolonged absence of a consolidated Western leadership (the US' disengagement was mainly blamed for this), China has taken the opportunity to expand strategies and impose its global agenda, not without geopolitical consequences. In a particular case, since the pandemic crisis began, Chinese medical aid didn't come for free to EU countries. Besides the import costs of face masks, testing kits, and ventilators in individual affected countries, there was growing concern of a serious division within the European bloc over the Chinese appealing intervention (especially as some member states decided to restrict the intercommunity export of medical supply). Added to this, the risk of global supply chains' increasing their dependence on China also made Europeans fear.

Revised by President Xi Jinping and the Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, at a time when Beijing struggled to deflect Western criticism over its mishandling of the coronavirus pandemic, a global Health Silk

⁷⁴ Barbara Moens, *The cure for the coronavirus crisis: More trade or less?*, April 1, 2020, <https://www.politico.eu/article/the-cure-for-the-coronavirus-crisis-more-trade-or-less/>, accessed May 10, 2020.

⁷⁵ Kirk Samson, *U.S.-EU Trade Talks: Under the Spectre of Coronavirus Pandemic*, March 3, 2020, <https://globalriskinsights.com/2020/03/u-s-eu-trade-talks-under-the-spectre-of-coronavirus-pandemic/>, accessed May 10, 2020.

⁷⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁷⁷ Philip Blenkinsop, Catherine Evans, *EU targets more U.S. imports after U.S. metal tariff extension*, April 6, 2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trade-eu/eu-targets-more-u-s-imports-after-u-s-metal-tariff-extension-idUSKBN21O168>, accessed May 10, 2020.

⁷⁸ Barbara Moens, *The cure for the coronavirus crisis: More trade or less?...*

Road under Chinese leadership accounted for an interesting means to restore diplomatic capital in the battle of narratives over the crisis.

To a debatable extent, this attempt could hint at a new front of strategic competition within the already prefigured geopolitical triangle, the EU-China-the US. The concept was brought to public attention as early as 2013, but it was given less attention due to other, high priority objectives of the BRI. However, some steps were taken in the meantime, as in 2017, Chinese representatives and the World Health Organization signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) establishing the “Health Silk Road.”

Present at the Belt and Road High Level Meeting for Health Cooperation in Beijing (August 18-20, 2017), the WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus affirmed the WHO’s support for such a comprehensive initiative in the medical field. Delegates from participating countries and high-level officials committed themselves to boost their cooperation on research, health security, and education within the BRI framework.⁷⁹

In his article entitled “Reviving China’s Health Silk Road Initiative? Battle of Narratives and Challenges for Transatlantic Leadership”, from March 30, 2020, Yixiang Xu, New Research Initiative Fellow, noted that Beijing latest strategy “is a reminder that the EU and the U.S. must step up their game and work together to both offer alternative development resources and engage the international institutions they created to advance common transatlantic values in true transparency, accountability, and sustainability.

The U.S. administration needs to rediscover the value of partnership and diplomacy while the EU’s search for more European autonomy should not lead to equal distance to the U.S. and China. (...) In their ongoing strategic competition with China, the transatlantic partners need to find solidarity in leadership”⁸⁰.

Nicholas Burns, former U.S. Ambassador to NATO (2001-2005)⁸¹, warned about the sensitivity of the pandemic crisis and shared the opinion of the transatlantic partners joining forces to revive bilateral relations for the global wellbeing: “Transatlantic relations will be dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic and global economic crises for months and years to come. They are the greatest challenges Americans, Canadians and Europeans have confronted since the Second World War. We will be far stronger by joining forces with these allies rather than by going it alone. (...) On the economic front, the European Union and the U.S. are the two largest global economies. Just as during the Great Recession, we should work closely together at the head of government level within the G-20 and G-7 bodies. Our leaders have failed to do so effectively since the start of the crisis. It is time to do so now”⁸².

Cathryn Clüver Ashbrook⁸³ noted that “this can be a time of powerful Western re-invention, with greater strategic adoption of ‘best practices’ in economies and labor markets, healthcare, intelligence, cyber, defense and more”⁸⁴.

⁷⁹ Yixiang Xu, *Reviving China’s Health Silk Road Initiative? Battle of Narratives and Challenges for Transatlantic Leadership*, March 30, 2020, <https://www.aicgs.org/2020/03/reviving-chinas-health-silk-road-initiative-battle-of-narratives-and-challenges-for-transatlantic-leadership/>, accessed May 11, 2020.

⁸⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁸¹ “Nicholas Burns is a Goodman Family Professor of the Practice of Diplomacy and International Relations and Faculty Chair of the Project on Europe and the Transatlantic Relationship at Harvard Kennedy School; Former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (2005-2008); Former U.S. Ambassador to NATO (2001-2005)”, see Josef Braml, Christian Mölling, *HOW WILL COVID-19 AFFECT THE TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONSHIP?*, <https://dgap.org/en/research/publications/how-will-covid-19-affect-transatlantic-relationship>, May 4, 2020, accessed May 11, 2020.

⁸² Nicholas Burns, “Commentary”, in Josef Braml, Christian Mölling, *loc. cit.*

⁸³ “Cathryn Clüver Ashbrook is Executive Director of the Future of Diplomacy Project and the Project on Europe and the Transatlantic Relationship at Harvard Kennedy School”, see Josef Braml, Christian Mölling, *loc. cit.*

⁸⁴ Cathryn Clüver Ashbrook, “Commentary”, in Josef Braml, Christian Mölling, *loc. cit.*

Anthony Gardner, former U.S. Ambassador to the European Union (2014-2017)⁸⁵, observed that “coronavirus may complicate efforts to restart an ambitious transatlantic free trade deal because of populist forces”⁸⁶ and agriculture will remain the most sensitive sector.

3.6. NEW TRADE PROSPECTS?

The Trade and Technology Council, established at Brussels 2021 summit, was meant to enhance bilateral trade across the Atlantic while coordinating EU and US policies in the fields of economic growth and development and digital transition respectively. It has ten working groups and it accounts for an important step towards transatlantic economic integration, given the fact that, until the moment, a transatlantic trade agreement does not exist.⁸⁷

Meanwhile, it is worth mentioning that European and American leaders convened upon negotiations on a transatlantic agreement on critical raw materials and upon a dialogue on US clean energy subsidies guaranteed under the American Inflation Reduction Act of 2022.⁸⁸ However, by 31 October 2023 the parts also must find a solution to put an end to the dispute over steel and aluminum products⁸⁹, otherwise the consequences might not be positive.

According to Eurostat data, in 2020, China was the EU’s largest import partner (22%), followed by the US at a ten points distance and by the UK (10%). On exports, the EU traded mostly with the US (18%), the UK (14%) and then China (10%).⁹⁰ The situation remained largely the same in 2021 (largest EU import partners: China – 22%, the US – 11%, Russia – 8%; top three import countries: the US – 18 %, the UK – 13 % and China – 10 %), as the figure below shows.

⁸⁵ “Anthony Gardner is Senior Advisor at the Brunswick Group and Former U.S. Ambassador to the European Union (2014-2017)”, see Josef Braml, Christian Mölling, *loc. cit.*

⁸⁶ Anthony Gardner, “Commentary”, in Josef Braml, Christian Mölling, *loc. cit.*

⁸⁷ The White House, *U.S.-EU Joint Statement of the Trade and Technology Council*, December 5, 2022, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/12/05/u-s-eu-joint-statement-of-the-trade-and-technology-council/>, accessed May 3, 2023.

⁸⁸ Le Monde with AFP, *US and EU begin negotiations on critical minerals access for EV batteries*, March 11, 2023, https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2023/03/10/us-and-eu-begin-negotiations-on-critical-minerals-access-for-ev-batteries_6018894_4.html, accessed May 4, 2023.

⁸⁹ Justine Coyne, US, *EU target Oct 2023 to wrap up global steel, aluminum negotiations: Biden*, <https://eurometal.net/us-eu-target-oct-2023-to-wrap-up-global-steel-aluminum-negotiations-biden/>, December 28, 2021, accessed May 4, 2023

⁹⁰ Eurostat, *Trade in goods by top 5 partners, European Union, 2020*, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/infographs/trade/trade_2020/, accessed May 4, 2023.

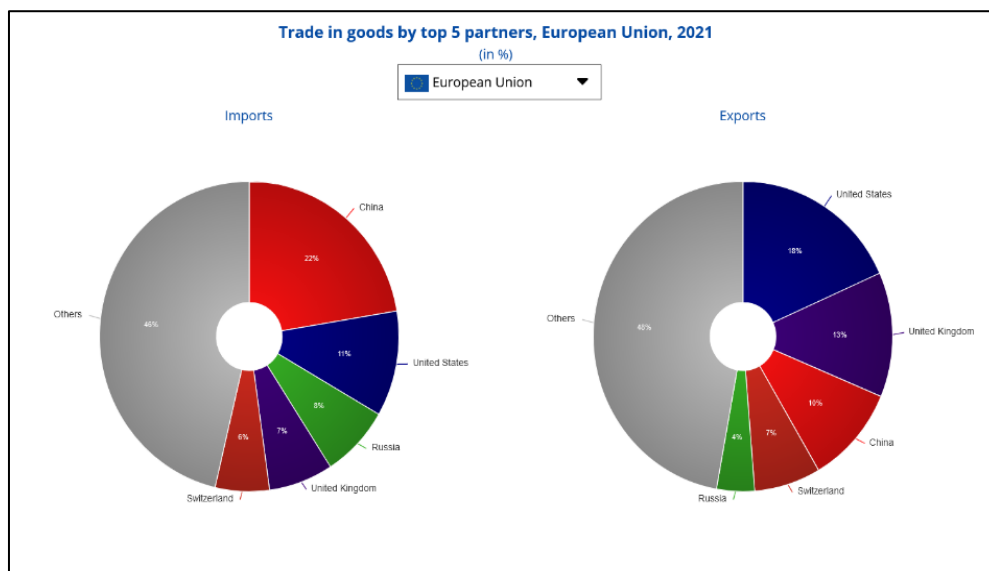


Fig.3.6.1. Trade in goods by top 5 partners, EU27, 2021

Source: Eurostat, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/infographs/trade/trade_2021/

To conclude, we can observe that transatlantic trade has experienced an ascendant curve in the last three decades, confirming the potential of the Western alliance, stimulated by bilateral EU-US (political) engagement, but there were also specific influences deriving from global economic trends that have impacted negatively upon bilateral exchanges on the two sides of the Atlantic, such as the Great Recession or, more recently, the worldwide coronavirus pandemic. To make the most of the impressive economic potential of EU-US cooperation, future (geo) political challenges must be wisely addressed.

CHAPTER 4.

“AN ENERGETIC TRANSATLANTIC ENVIRONMENT”¹

In this chapter we are going to assess the evolution of the Euro-Atlantic cooperation on the increasingly competitive energy market as well as the two block's position towards the ambitious goal of environmental safety and sustainability, in accordance with multilateral standards set at global level.

“U.S.–EU energy cooperation has a win-win history. Many challenges remain, and opportunities to build business ties abound. We should seize them”², Douglas Hengel, a former U.S. foreign service officer and GMFUS Senior Fellow remarked back in 2017.

The EU and the US account for the two greatest energy consumers at global level and they do share the responsibility to react with a joint approach to constantly growing challenges on energy security. Generally speaking, as traditional partners in the environmental and energy sectors, the EU and the US shared a common perspective on the necessity to develop transparent, competitive, and dynamic energy markets.

“Whatever the Trump Administration decides to do about the Paris Agreement, the climate agenda is not going away”³, Hengel argued. “Presidents Bush and Obama both found it useful to shape the international climate framework working with our European partners, despite our differences on approaches. Europe will want to keep the United States engaged on climate as much as possible, and it is not in the U.S. interest to be isolated on this issue. So despite our differences, there will be strong incentives for the United States and EU to work together on a structure that allows continued forward movement on global climate engagement”⁴.

In the wake of global challenges, we uphold the opinion that transatlantic cooperation on energy and environment is significantly needed nowadays, as it has been for decades. Bilateral agreements and high-level EU-US forums have tried to shape the two partners' strategic directions and impose concrete action plans to address the evolution of climate and sustainable energy trends.

With a visible desire to “lead by example”, EU policies developed and perpetuated (or enhanced) over the years have managed to propel a strong European pillar within the transatlantic alliance, with notable aspirations for both its own member states' progress on sensitive topics like energy and environment and the multilateralism-driven wellbeing and economic prosperity of its global partners and the world at large, as we speak here of cross-border issues, bearing a visible impact on future generations.

4.1. PREMISES OF TRANSATLANTIC ENERGY COOPERATION

The EU-U.S. Declaration “Initiative to enhance transatlantic economic integration and growth” (Washington, June 20, 2005), adopted at the June 2005 EU-US Summit, signaled that “one of the greatest needs for developing countries today is to provide the basic energy services necessary to lift their citizens out of poverty”⁵. The Parts have acknowledged “the important potential that can result from further efforts”⁶ and

¹ This chapter has been previously published, in a slightly revised form, as an article entitled “An energetic transatlantic environment”, in Mircea Brie, Ioan Horga, Florentina Chirodea (eds.), *Analele Universității din Oradea-Relații Internaționale și Studii Europene*, TOM XII, Oradea: Editura Universității din Oradea, 2020.

² Douglas Hengel, *The Next Phase of U.S.–EU Energy Cooperation*, April 10, 2017, <https://www.gmfus.org/blog/2017/04/10/next-phase-us-eu-energy-cooperation>, accessed June 2, 2020.

³ *Ibidem*.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵ COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION, *EU-U.S. DECLARATION INITIATIVE TO ENHANCE TRANSATLANTIC ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND GROWTH*, Annex to the ANNEX, Brussels, 20 June 2005, pp. 11-12, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/er/85383.pdf, accessed June 1, 2020

⁶ *Ibidem*.

pledged “to cooperate to promote sound energy policies, improve energy security and foster economic growth and development”⁷.

As stated in the document, targeted activities fell in the following areas of common action, among others: policies to ensure energy efficiency, the availability of renewable energy sources and advanced energy technologies affordable to citizens in developing countries; cooperating to promote clean, efficient technologies, in major developing countries, to replace the heavy reliance on fossil fuels at global level; fostering (international) collaboration on hydrogen technologies; cooperating to gather mutual knowledge on nuclear safety measures; continuing research on all types of renewable energies and promoting related technology and policy measures.⁸

In 2006, the US and the European Community renewed their accord on the energy efficiency labeling of office equipment on the basis of EPA’s ENERGY STAR, signed in 2001. It was one of the accomplishments of the first EU-US informal economic ministerial meeting (on the 30th of November 2005) following up on the commitments made during the June summit in Washington.⁹ The renewed version of the Accord has expired on February 20, 2018.

Besides considering enhancing bilateral relations with actors like Russia, China, India, or developing connections with producers in Central Asia (Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan) and the African countries, the EU International Energy Policy Priorities as of 2007 mentioned “the scope of relations with partners like the US should continue to cover areas like promoting open and competitive global energy markets, energy efficiency, regulatory cooperation and research”¹⁰.

The 2008 EU Energy Security and Solidarity Action Plan included among its priorities comprehensive infrastructure projects, aimed at interconnecting EU member states, providing “transparent and reliable framework conditions within the EU and with respect to third countries so that business will be able to take up new investment opportunities”¹¹.

Developing a Baltic Interconnection Plan, as well as a southern gas corridor were considered on the Commission agenda for the coming years and will have been reiterated by President Barroso and his successors in Brussels as key elements in the EU energy policy. Engaging with third countries like Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Iraq and Mashreq countries or Uzbekistan and Iran had been proposed in the 2008 Commission’s Communication for the medium and longer term.¹²

Substantial efforts of all interested parties to finance such projects and a closer cooperation with private entities and financial institutions, especially the EIB and EBRD were deemed indispensable to finance for cross-border initiatives.¹³ We will explore further a concrete example of this kind, as we will discuss the BRUA pipeline project in the next subchapter.

Future energy cooperation with the BRICS and African countries did not exclude the US from the EU’s vision to deepen and promote common actions for global energy security, transparent global energy markets and sustainability.¹⁴ Though admitting that “Russia will remain the EU’s main energy partner far into the future”¹⁵, the perspective of LNG imports and adequate storage capacities was of particular importance for

⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁹ Energy Star, *US and the European Union renew ENERGY STAR Agreement*, December 20, 2006, <https://www.energystar.gov/about/content/us-and-european-union-renew-energy-star-agreement>, accessed June 1, 2020.

¹⁰ Commission of the European Communities, *An Energy Policy For Europe*, Brussels, 2007, pp. 23-24, <https://www.ebb.eu.org/legis/energy%20policy%20for%20europe%20100107%20provisional%20version.pdf>, accessed June 1, 2020.

¹¹ COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES, *AN EU ENERGY SECURITY AND SOLIDARITY ACTION PLAN*, Brussels, November 13, 2008, p. 4, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0781:FIN:EN:PDF>, accessed June 2, 2020.

¹² *Ibidem*, pp.4-5.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p.6.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p.9.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p.8.

Member States then heavily relying on a single gas supplier. “LNG terminals and ship-based regasification in the EU should be available all throughout the EU”¹⁶, to meet the member countries’ specific needs, the Commission proposal noted.

The figure below (Fig.4.1.1.a) depicts the evolution of LNG imports into the EU, from 2004 to 2017, with an overall ascendant tendency between 2004 and 2009. In 2011 they reached a peak of 8 bcf/d and they will have gone mostly up since then until the end of 2019 (some variations can be seen in Figure 4.1.1.b). The first US LNG delivery to Europe came no sooner than April 2016, when a single cargo entered Portugal.¹⁷

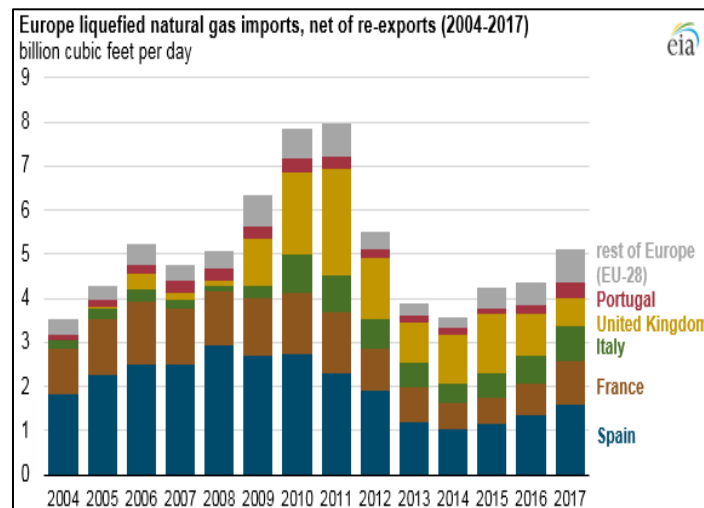


Fig.4.1.1.a Europe liquefied natural gas imports, in bcf/d (2004-2017)

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, based on International Group 2018-Nov 2019) Annual Reports, 2005–2018, <https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=37354>

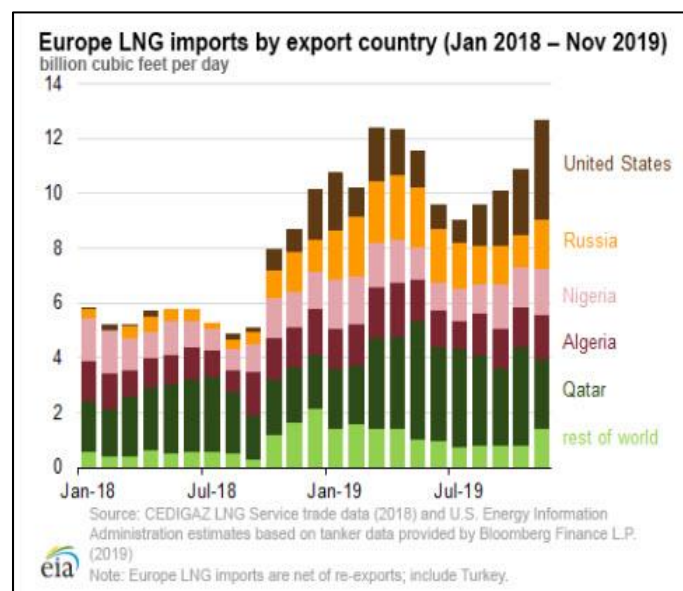


Fig.4.1.1.b Europe LNG imports by export country, in bcf/d (Jan 2018-Nov 2019)

Source: CEDIGAZ LNG Service Trade Data (2018), U.S. Energy Information Administration, based on tanker data from Bloomberg Finance L.P. (2019), https://www.eia.gov/naturalgas/weekly/archivenew_ngwu/2019/12_19/

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p.5.

¹⁷ Sylvie Cornot-Gandolphe, “The US Natural Gas Exports : New Rules on the European Gas Landscape”, *Études de l’Ifri*, June 2016, p. 24, https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/etude_cornot_gaz_naturel_en_europe_en_okdb_complet-reduit_ok.pdf, accessed June 2020.

4.2. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS

Concerning environmental policies, through the 2020 climate & energy package, the EU has committed in 2007 to the goal of the “20-20-20” initiative: “reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 20%, increasing the share of renewables in the energy consumption to 20% compared to 8.5% today and improving energy efficiency by 20%, all by 2020”¹⁸. These goals were also targeted by the Europe 2020 strategy.¹⁹

The EU has overachieved commitments made under the Kyoto Protocol (effective since 16 February 2005) to decrease emissions by 8% between 2008 and 2012, as well as between 2013 and 2020. The EU has reached its 2020 target six years earlier than projected, managing to reduce emissions by around 22% between 1990 and 2017, according to a European Commission assessment.²⁰ Targets for GHG emissions reduction will have risen during the next European Commissions’ mandate, as displayed in the figure below.

The US has never ratified the Kyoto Protocol.

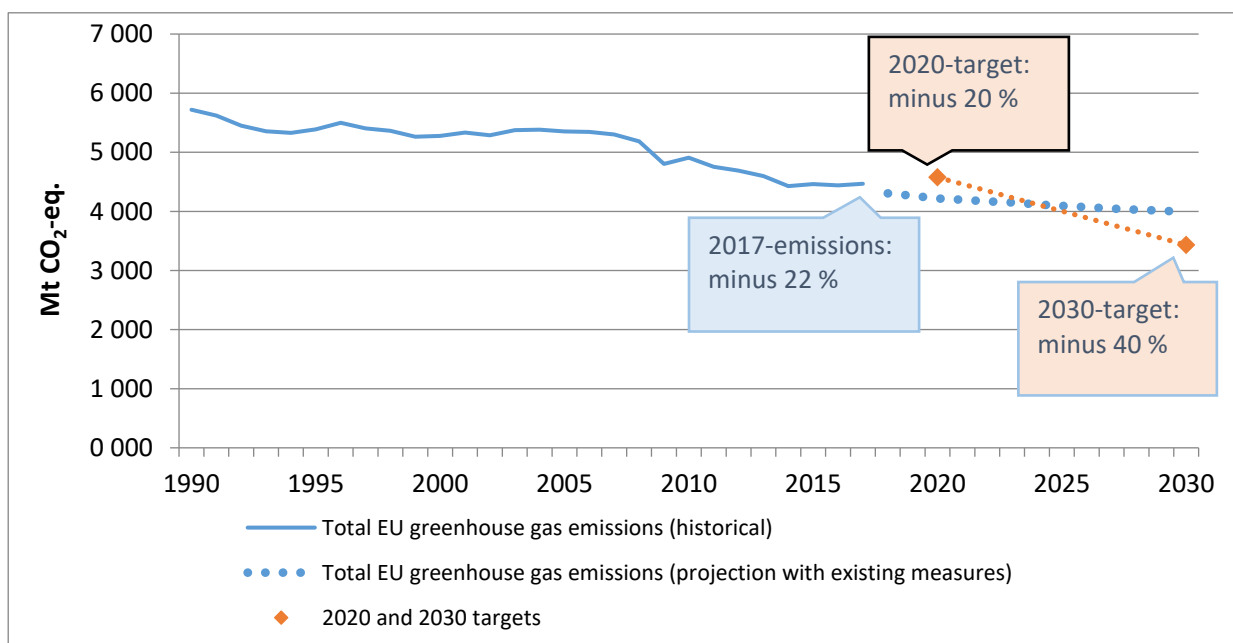


Fig.4.2.1. Total EU GHG emissions and GHG reduction targets.

Source: Council of the European Union, <http://europeanmemoranda.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/files/2018/10/ST-13696-2018-INIT-EN.pdf>

4.3. TRANSATLANTIC ENERGY COOPERATION BETWEEN 2009 AND 2017

“The economic and financial crisis and the scientific evidence of climate change have shown us that we need to invest more in sustainability”²¹, José Manuel Barroso assessed in his 2009 Political Guidelines.

¹⁸ European Commission, 2020 climate & energy package, https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/strategies/2020_en, accessed June 2, 2020.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

²⁰ European Commission, *EU and the Paris Climate Agreement: Taking stock of progress at Katowice COP, REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL*, Brussels, 26.10.2018, p. 1, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018DC0716&from=EN>, accessed June 2, 2020.

²¹ José Manuel Barroso, *Political guidelines for the next Commission*, p.21, https://sbe.org.gr/newsletters/eflashnews/2009_21/Barroso_Political_Guidelines_2009.pdf, accessed June 1, 2020.

With a vision for a more sustainable Europe by 2020, the EU global leadership in fighting climate change was expressed in the Guidelines, as he defined the Europe he believes in and pledged for “promoting energy security, while helping European technology and European companies to pioneer in the development of a low carbon economy”²², which can provide tremendous opportunities.

Tackling climate change and implementing sustainable energy policies was deemed as requiring European and global solidarity, as “our interdependence, inside Europe and worldwide, has never been clearer”²³, he added. Moreover, “good interconnections will be crucial to power future growth”, Barroso opinionated, an idea which remained constant in the Juncker Commission too.

The creation of the EU-US Energy Council in 2009 has helped enhancing transatlantic energy cooperation. The Council was set to meet on an annual basis, alternately in the EU and US, and report to the EU-US Summit. The last time officials met in Brussels on 12 July 2018.

The Council activity was going to be divided in working groups of senior EU and US officials, focusing on the following specific agendas: “Energy Policies, Global Energy Security and Global Markets, and Energy Technologies Research Cooperation”.²⁴

As the founding document reads: “The EU-US Energy Council will provide a new framework for deepening the transatlantic dialogue on strategic energy issues such as security of supply or policies to move towards low carbon energy sources while strengthening the ongoing scientific collaboration on energy technologies”²⁵.

Concrete actions that the partners have envisioned included: supporting stable and transparent energy markets, modern infrastructure and diverse energy routes and sources, increased energy efficiency, security of transit and key infrastructures to improve global and regional energy security, advancing ongoing collaboration on renewable technologies, on nuclear energy, supporting sustainable development of biofuels and biomass, developing carbon capture and storage technologies, strengthening international energy policy cooperation while prospecting relations with third states, encouraging energy efficiency and low-carbon economies in developing countries and examining partnership opportunities between US and European firms and investors in sustainable technologies.²⁶

²² *New EU-US Energy Council to boost transatlantic energy cooperation*, Brussels, November 4, 2009, <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/documents/2009.11.04%201st%20Press%20statement%20final.pdf>, accessed May 26, 2020.

²³ *Ibidem*.

²⁴ *Ibidem*.

²⁵ *Ibidem*.

²⁶ *The EU-U.S. Energy Council, Annex 2*, 2009, https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/documents/2009_energy_council_joint_press_statement.pdf, accessed May 26, 2020.

Table 4.3.1. Main Origin of primary energy imports, EU-28, 2007-2017 (% of extra EU-28 imports)

	Hard coal (based on tonnes)										
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Russia	25.2	26.1	31.1	27.4	26.7	26.2	30.0	31.0	29.8	30.7	38.9
Colombia	11.8	11.9	16.4	18.7	21.3	22.2	19.4	19.8	22.2	21.1	16.9
United States	9.7	14.7	14.3	17.6	18.6	22.9	22.3	20.5	14.7	13.2	16.9
Australia	14.2	12.5	7.9	11.3	9.4	8.0	8.5	7.2	11.2	16.3	11.8
South Africa	20.2	16.8	15.6	9.8	8.3	6.6	6.1	7.9	7.4	5.3	4.9
Indonesia	7.8	7.2	6.7	5.5	5.1	4.6	3.3	3.7	4.0	3.4	3.4
Canada	3.3	2.8	1.5	2.1	2.3	1.8	2.0	2.9	1.7	2.3	2.5
Mozambique	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.8	1.2
Kazakhstan	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.6	0.6	1.0	0.7
Others	5.1	5.5	4.2	3.5	4.0	3.0	3.1	3.6	2.4	2.5	2.4
	Crude oil (based on tonnes)										
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Russia	33.7	31.8	33.6	34.7	34.7	33.6	33.7	30.4	29.0	31.9	30.3
Norway	15.0	15.0	15.1	13.7	12.6	11.3	11.8	13.1	12.1	12.5	11.4
Iraq	3.4	3.3	3.8	3.2	3.6	4.1	3.6	4.6	7.6	8.3	8.2
Kazakhstan	4.6	4.8	5.3	5.5	5.7	5.1	5.7	6.4	6.6	6.8	7.4
Saudi Arabia	7.2	6.8	5.7	5.9	8.0	8.8	8.7	8.9	7.9	7.8	6.6
Nigeria	2.7	4.0	4.5	4.1	6.1	8.2	8.1	9.1	8.4	5.7	6.4
Iran	6.2	5.3	4.7	5.7	5.8	1.3	0.0	0.1	0.0	2.9	5.2
Libya	9.7	9.9	8.9	10.1	2.8	8.1	5.6	3.3	2.4	2.3	5.2
Azerbaijan	3.0	3.2	4.0	4.4	4.9	3.9	4.8	4.4	5.2	4.5	4.5
Others	14.6	16.0	14.4	12.7	15.9	15.6	17.9	19.6	20.7	17.4	14.8
	Natural gas (based on terajoule (gross calorific value - GCV))										
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Russia	38.7	37.4	33.0	31.9	34.4	34.9	41.1	37.4	37.7	39.8	38.7
Norway	28.1	28.5	29.7	27.9	27.6	31.8	30.4	32.1	32.1	25.1	25.3
Algeria	15.3	14.7	14.1	13.9	13.1	13.3	12.6	12.0	10.8	12.5	10.6
Qatar	2.2	2.3	5.9	9.7	11.6	8.4	6.5	6.8	7.7	5.7	5.2
Nigeria	4.6	4.0	2.4	4.0	4.4	3.1	1.7	1.5	2.0	2.0	2.5
Libya	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.7	0.7	1.9	1.7	2.1	2.1	1.3	1.1
Peru	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.9
United States	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.4
Trinidad and Tobago	0.8	1.7	2.0	1.4	1.2	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.3	0.3
Others	7.3	8.5	9.9	8.3	6.9	5.0	4.7	6.7	6.6	12.9	15.0

Source: Eurostat, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3217494/10165279/KS-DK-19-001-EN-N.pdf/76651a29-b817-eed4-f9f2-92bf692e1ed9>

As the table above shows, between 2007 and 2012, EU hard coal imports from the US (% of extra EU-28 imports) have been on an ascendant curve, reaching their maximum level in 2012 (22, 9%). Since then, they have declined visibly until 2017, when values rose again up to almost 17 %. Russia was the main hard coal supplier to the European Union in the last ten years, while the US represented the third most important source of hard coal for the EU-28 in 2017.

Imports of US natural gas were inexistent until 2016, when they amounted to 0.1 %, rising to 0.4 % in 2017.

Jean-Claude Juncker's Political Guidelines (July 15, 2014) mentioned the Ukrainian geopolitical crisis that reminded Europeans they do rely considerably on foreign gas.

One of the former Juncker Commission's priorities (2014) underlined the need "to reform and reorganize Europe's energy policy in a new European Energy Union. We need to pool our resources, combine our infrastructures and unite our negotiating power vis-à-vis third countries. We need to diversify our energy sources, and reduce the energy dependency of several of our Member States. I want to keep our European energy market open to our neighbors. However, if the price for energy from the East becomes too expensive, either in commercial or in political terms, Europe should be able to switch very swiftly to other supply channels. We need to be able to reverse energy flows when necessary"²⁷.

In his 2015 State of the Union discourse, President Juncker reminded that the European Commission "has been working with the countries of Central and South East Europe in designing the networks that will

²⁷ Jean-Claude Juncker, *My Priorities*, 2014, <http://juncker.epp.eu/my-priorities>, accessed June 1, 2020.

guarantee gas supply in case of disruption of imports”²⁸, while also upgrading “the Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan to bring the electricity grid of that part of the EU closer to the European markets thereby strengthening the energy security of the Baltics”²⁹.

Interconnectivity projects among EU states continued to be promoted by the European Commission (e.g. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland/ Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Austria, and Romania), as reflected in the 2016 State of the Union speech, with a focus on energy security aspects, to minimize interruptions to supply. As infrastructure is critical, the EU leaders have adopted 195 projects of common interest (PCI) eligible for financial assistance.³⁰

To give an example, the strategic aim of diversifying gas supply sources and routes as an alternative to the Russian production had been and is currently addressed by the comprehensive infrastructure project called ROHUAT/BRUA, denominated after the initiating European countries: Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Austria. BRUA was launched as a concept in the second half of 2013, when the former NABUCCO was deselected as the route preferred for the Caspian gas transmission to the Central European markets, and it accounts for a strong example of Romania and the EU developing its own internal potential in the field of energy.

The BRUA project aims at developing the gas transmission system capacities between the interconnections of the Romanian, Bulgarian and Hungarian gas transmission systems (GTS), consisting in the construction of a new transmission pipeline to connect the Technological Node at Podișor to the Horia gas metering station (GMS).

Ensuring adequate gas transmission capacities at the cross-border interconnection points between Romania and Bulgaria and between Romania and Hungary bears the potential to increase interconnectivity at European level, with the Black Sea gas resources reaching broader Central-European markets.

BRUA was inserted on the updated PCI list published in November 2017 as an Annex to EU Regulation 347/2013 and on the list of priorities of the CESEC (Central East Europe Gas Connectivity).

The two implementation phases envisage: “the development of the transmission capacity in Romania from Podișor to Receaș, including a new pipeline, metering station and three new compressor stations in Podișor, Bibești and Jupa – 6.24.1-2 in the Third PCI List /2017-BRUA Phase 1”³¹ and “the expansion of the transmission capacity in Romania from Receaș to Horia towards Hungary up to 4.4 bcm/a and expansion of the compressor stations in Podișor, Bibești and Jupa – 6.24.4-4 in List 3 PCI/2017- BRUA Phase 2”³². The completion of Phase 2 (a commercial one) depends on the procedure for capacity booking at Csanadpalota IP and on the timeline of this procedure.

On top of that, this second phase could enable extracting gas from the Black Sea and transporting it on the Romanian and other European markets, provided the concessionaires of the offshore perimeters decide to make this investment and initiate the drilling procedure (incentivized by a friendly Romanian legislation). To facilitate this procedure, the Romanian gas transmission operator, Transgaz, has set up the goal of constructing a 308.3 km Tuzla-Podișor telescopic gas transmission pipeline to connect the gas resources available at the Black Sea shore and the BRUA corridor, thus enabling gas transmission to Bulgaria and Hungary. Commissioning (start-up) of the Tuzla-Podișor pipeline is due 2025.

Besides the company’s own financial resources invested in the project, the EU has supported BRUA with a grant of around € 180 million (40% out of the total eligible costs amounting to € 478.6 million) for the

²⁸ Jean-Claude Juncker, *State of the Union 2015*, 9 September 2015, p. 37, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/state_of_the_union_2015_en.pdf, accessed June 1, 2020.

²⁹ *Ibidem*.

³⁰ Jean-Claude Juncker, “A resilient energy union with a forward looking climate change policy”, in *STATE OF THE UNION 2016*, September 14, 2016, p.36, file:///D:/Downloads/NA0216997ENN.en.pdf, accessed June 1, 2020.

³¹ Transgaz, *REPORT ISSUED BY THE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION*, April 27, 2020, https://www.transgaz.ro/sites/default/files/Art.2%20engleza_11.pdf, accessed May 30, 2020, p. 22.

³² *Ibidem*.

construction of the pipeline, through Connecting Europe Facility. For the design of the three compressor stations, a Financing Contract was signed with Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INEA) for a grant in the amount of 1.519.342 EUR (50% of the total estimated FEED costs for the compressor stations). Additionally, loans from European financial institutions (EBRD and EIB) have been contracted.³³ BRUA Phase 1 was finalized in December 2020.



Fig.4.3.1. The interconnection points of the Romanian GTS with the similar Bulgarian and Hungarian systems

Source: Transgaz, https://www.transgaz.ro/sites/default/files/Art.2%20engleza_11.pdf

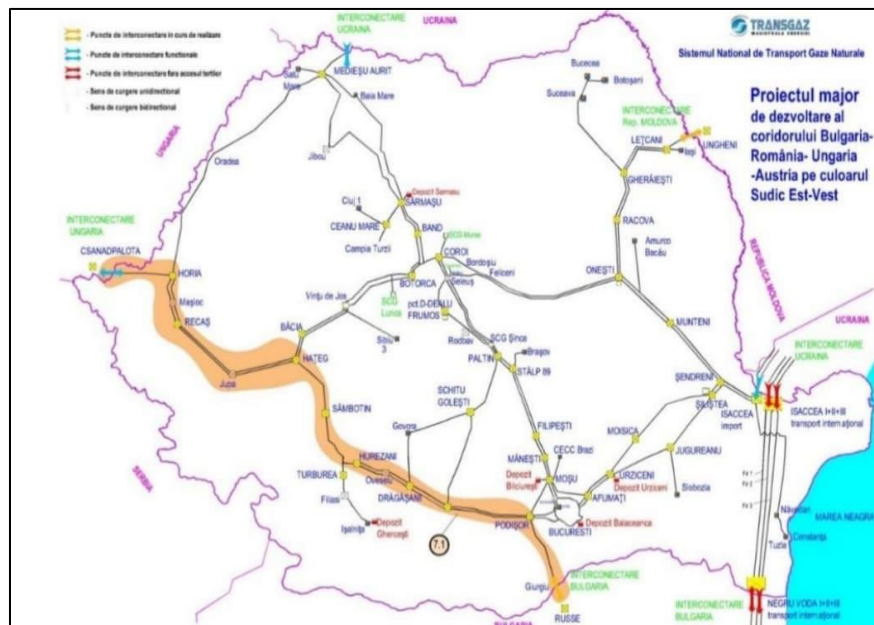


Fig.4.3.2. Map of the key development project of the Bulgaria-Romania-Hungary-Austria Corridor – Phase 1

Source: Transgaz, https://www.transgaz.ro/sites/default/files/Art.2%20engleza_11.pdf.

³³ Transgaz, *REPORT ISSUED BY THE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION*, loc.cit., pp. 21, 22, 24, 25, 35.

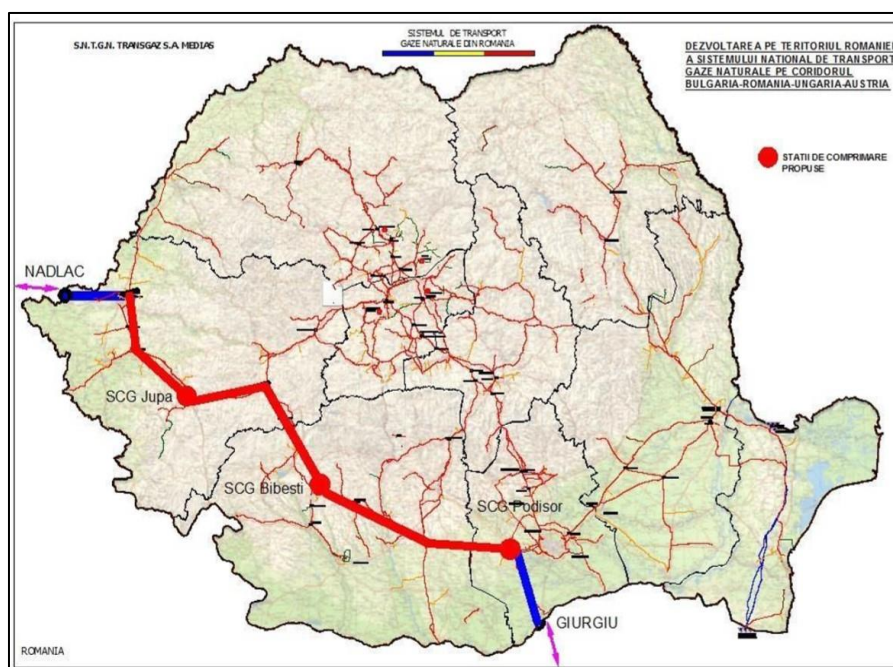


Fig. 4.3.3. Map of the main development project related to the Corridor Bulgaria-Hungary-Austria – Phase 2

Source: Transgaz, https://www.transgaz.ro/sites/default/files/Art.2%20engleza_11.pdf

Based on its longstanding reputation in the field, the US company Solar Turbine had won the auction opened for the selection of the entity in charge of constructing the BRUA pipeline compressor groups within the compressor stations on the Romanian territory. Also, the American partners have supported financially the modernization of the compressor station in Șinca Nouă, Brașov County, commissioned on November 12, 2015.

The then Romanian Minister of Energy, Mr. Andrei Gerea, mentioned that modernizing this station has brought a contribution to Romania's energy independence and to its status of key player on the regional energy market. It was considered to be part of future interconnection projects, ensuring national capacity to process and distribute natural gas from the Black Sea.³⁴

4.4. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS

After meeting US President Barack Obama in 2009, while addressing to both houses of the US Congress, former German Chancellor Angela Merkel has clarified that an urgent, multilateral climate agreement in the upcoming UN Climate Conference in Copenhagen (2009) must maintain global heating below 2°C. She was the first German chancellor to address the Congress after Konrad Adenauer in 1957. Though endorsed by over 140 UNFCCC Parties, The Copenhagen Accord was not adopted as a UN decision. Formal acknowledgment by the UN came one year later, in Cancún. The Durban Conference (2011) rendered the Cancún Agreements operational and built on them.³⁵

Chancellor Merkel underlined that “we have no time to lose. (...) It is true that there can be no agreement without China and India accepting obligations, but I am convinced that if we in Europe and America

³⁴ Mădălin Iacob, *Stație modernizată a Transgaz, inaugurată în județul Brașov*, November 12, 2015, <http://www.romania-actualitati.ro/statie-modernizata-a-transgaz-inaugurata-in-judetul-brasov-83209>, accessed July 20, 2020.

³⁵ European Commission, *The road to Paris*, https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/international/negotiations/progress_en, accessed May 26, 2020.

show that we are ready to accept binding obligations, we will also be able to persuade China and India to join in”³⁶.

In Barroso’s view, the EU’s capacity to take the lead on climate change was revealed in “agreeing to binding targets but also in approach the climate change negotiations in Copenhagen (2009) with a clear vision of how the global community can address the problem it faces and a clear commitment to climate finance for developing countries”³⁷.

Global efforts reached their peak with the ratification by almost 190 Parties of the Paris Agreement. The EU has ratified it on 5 October 2016, and it has come into effect on 4 November 2016.

Junker Commission’s priorities (2014) had also referred to a more ambitious “climate change policy”, as part of the consequences of fostering what he called “the Energy Union”: “And we need to strengthen the share of renewable energies on our continent. This is not only a matter of a responsible climate change policy. It is, at the same time, an industrial policy imperative if we still want to have affordable energy at our disposal in the medium term. I therefore want Europe’s Energy Union to become the world number one in renewable energies”³⁸.

2015 and 2016 State of the Union speeches have both reiterated the EU’s aim of reduce domestic greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% by 2030. Referring to the Paris Agreement, President Juncker denominated it the “last chance to hand over to future generations a more stable world, a healthier planet, fairer societies and more prosperous economies”³⁹.

Addressing in the Rose Garden on October 5, 2016, former US President Barack Obama praised the historic day of signing the Accord “in the fight to protect our planet for future generations”⁴⁰. He recalled the beginning of talks back in 2009 and the US “leadership by example”: “In 2009, we salvaged a chaotic climate summit in Copenhagen, establishing the principle that all nations have a role to play in combating climate change. (...) We continued to lead by example with our historic joint announcement with China two years ago, where we put forward even more ambitious climate targets. And that achievement encouraged dozens of other countries to set more ambitious climate targets of their own. And that, in turn, paved the way for our success in Paris -- the idea that no nation, not even one as powerful as ours, can solve this challenge alone. All of us have to solve it together”.⁴¹

4.5. TRANSATLANTIC ENERGY COOPERATION AFTER 2017

Supportive of the transatlantic energy cooperation, in order to diversify its energy import sources and make its energy supply more secure, the European Union would have imported more LNG from the US, the Joint U.S.-EU Statement (July 2018) reads.⁴² American LNG exports to the EU rose significantly between 2016 and 2019. A steep increase could have been observed especially after the visit that Jean-Claude Juncker, paid to Washington to meet President Donald Trump in July 2018.

Despite its continuous goal to reduce EU’s reliance on Russian energy since the 2014 Ukrainian crisis, Europeans’ pledge to buy more American gas-as long as they sell it at a competitive price- came as a means

³⁶ Euractiv, *EU-US summit yields energy cooperation*, November 5, 2009, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/development-policy/news/eu-us-summit-yields-energy-cooperation/>, accessed May 26, 2020.

³⁷ José Manuel Barroso, *Political guidelines for the next Commission*, loc. cit.

³⁸ Jean-Claude Juncker, *My Priorities*, loc. cit.

³⁹ Jean-Claude Juncker, “A resilient energy union with a forward-looking climate change policy”, loc. cit.

⁴⁰ The White House, *Office of the Press Secretary, Remarks by the President on the Paris Agreement*, October 5, 2016, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/10/05/remarks-president-paris-agreement>, accessed June 1, 2020.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

⁴² European Commission, *Joint U.S.-EU Statement following President Juncker's visit to the White House*, July 25, 2018, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/STATEMENT_18_4687, accessed May 27, 2020.

to ease frictions in the midst of the well-known trade wars between the blocs and to avoid the imposition of further tariff barriers.

Former US Energy Secretary Rick Perry, attending an energy summit in Brussels, said in 2019 that the agreement to boost US gas exports would generate a “tremendous mutual benefit” for the parts. He added that price should not be the only aspect considered when purchasing gas. “You get what you pay for ... you might buy cheaper somewhere else, but it may not be reliable”⁴³, he said while answering a question about the Russian-sourced natural gas.

The EU imports 77% of its natural gas. Less than 1% came from the US, as of 2019.

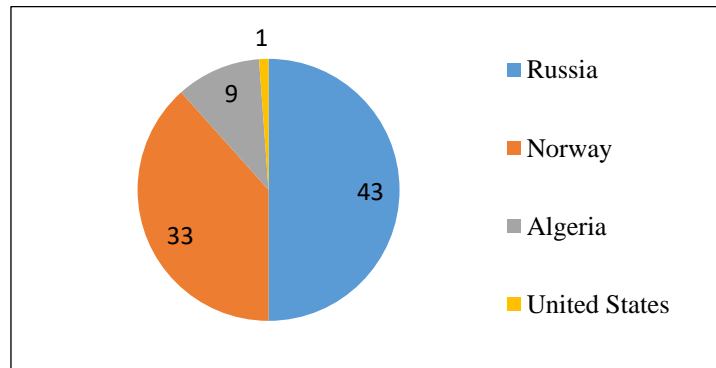


Fig.4.5.1.Europe's Gas Imports (2019)

Source: CNN Business, <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/05/02/business/natural-gas-us-eu/index.html>

The biggest volume ever of EU-U.S. LNG trade (over 1.4 bcm, worth around €0.3 billion) was tracked in March 2019. By 19th of November the imports reached virtually 2.6 bcm, with an approximate value of €0.4 billion.⁴⁴

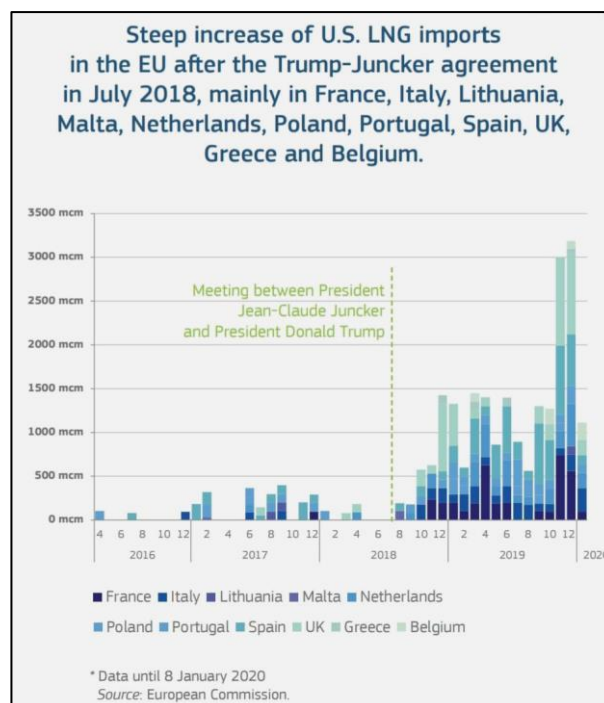


Fig. 4.5.2. US LNG exports to the EU (in bcm)

Source: European Commission, https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/eu-us_lng_trade_folder.pdf.

⁴³ Ivana Kottasová, *Europe's imports of American natural gas are soaring*, May 2, 2019, <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/05/02/business/natural-gas-us-eu/index.html>, accessed May 27, 2020.

⁴⁴ European Commission, *EU-U.S. LNG TRADE-U.S. liquefied natural gas (LNG) has the potential to help match EU gas needs*, November 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/eu-us_lng_trade_folder.pdf, accessed May 27, 2020.

Since April 2016, 19.4 bcm (EUR 3.4 billion) of U.S. LNG has been imported in the EU. The European Commission assessment underlined in 2019 that transatlantic LNG trade could increase more in the medium future, with more than 8 bcm/y contracted by US and European companies from 2018 onwards. Moreover, reinforcing EU-US energy cooperation was understood as potentially delivering a signal for the entire European continent and the globe concerning the advantages of U.S. LNG. According to the European Commission, this can play an important role in the EU energy supply chain, while contributing to enhanced diversification and the EU energy security.

Future cooperation will consider: removing U.S. LNG licensing barriers, identifying means to equalize markets access purposes, jointly completing crucial infrastructure and investments in Europe for better accessing LNG resources, and establishing regular consultations with business agents.⁴⁵ On a different note, boosting gas exports could significantly affect GHG emissions outside of the US, an analysis conducted by Climate Action Tracker (2019) noted.⁴⁶

4.6. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS

The Political Guidelines of the von der Leyen Commission (2019-2024) did not mention precisely a coherent energy policy of the EU. Instead, the new approach focuses more on addressing climate-related issues, by introducing the ambitious European Green Deal, a pioneering EU initiative to achieve climate neutrality.

The Paris Agreement goals and the 2030 targets are to be met, while extending the EU potential even further. For instance, the goal of 40% emissions reduction by 2030 could be overpassed by more successful results (50-55% by 2030 and even zero emissions by 2050). Proposals also included the first European Climate Law to stipulate the 2050 climate neutrality objective. In order to make sure that EU companies compete in a fair manner, a Carbon Border Tax will be implemented to avoid carbon leakage, in full compliance with the multilateral system of the WTO rules. A review of the Energy Taxation Directive was also on the new Commission's agenda.

To ensure a just transition for all (European citizens and regions), the EC has proposed establishing a Just Transition Fund. A European Climate Pact could design and implement measures to stimulate new behavioral patterns, from the individual to the largest multinational.

Since public finances alone will not suffice to achieve the ambitious goals, tapping into private investment will be resorted to as well - as stated in the Guidelines -, with green and sustainable financing to take center stage in the EU investment chain and financial system. A Sustainable Europe Investment Plan will support investments up to €1 trillion in the next years all over the EU.⁴⁷

As part of the European Green Deal, the European Commission pledged to come up with a Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. People's and planet's health are tightly interconnected.

The farmers' efforts to offer Europeans healthy, affordable and safe food will be supported with "a new <<Farm to Fork Strategy>> on sustainable food along the whole value chain"⁴⁸, the Guidelines read. Investing in the future development and preservation of the rural areas is a desired end of the Commission's plan for the period 2019-2024.⁴⁹

The idea of a European Green Deal also came as a consequence of the US' retreat from the Paris Agreement. On November 4, 2019, the US notified the international community about their withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement, "because of the unfair economic burden imposed on American workers,

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁶ Climate Action Tracker, *Effect of the US withdrawal from the Paris Agreement*, November 1, 2019, https://climateactiontracker.org/documents/650/CAT_2019-11-01_EffectOfTrumpOfficialPAWithdrawl.pdf, accessed May 30, 2020

⁴⁷ Ursula von der Leyen, *Political guidelines*, pp.5-6, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, p.7.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*.

businesses, and taxpayers by U.S. pledges made under the Agreement”⁵⁰. The announcement is the first step of a one-year-long process formalizing the US decision by November 2020, thus making them the only country outside the accord.

In this strained context, the von der Leyen Commission took the opportunity to pledge for an ambitious aim to “lead international negotiations to increase the level of ambition of other major emitters by 2021”⁵¹. Moreover, concerns in the EU have made leaders consider more seriously the already existing EU-China cooperation on climate matters. While in Shanghai to chair the opening ceremony of the international exhibition of Shanghai imports, French President Emmanuel Macron said that “the cooperation between China and the European Union in this respect is decisive”⁵².

Bas Eickhout, a Greens MEP, stated in 2019: “the fact that the U.S. has abandoned the global climate stage makes it even more important that the EU steps up its game and leads the way at international climate negotiations. The new Climate Commissioner, Frans Timmermans, should start by proposing higher climate targets of reducing CO2 emissions by at least 65 percent by 2030”⁵³, he added.

Besides this striking political decision, the Trump Administration has proposed more than 50 rollbacks targeting climate policy. The table below presents a selection of them - completed or in process - as well as the estimated effects on the environment, some of them potentially contributing to an increase in GHG emissions with about 3% by 2030.

Table 4.6.1. Selection of policy rollbacks since the start of Trump’s Administration

Policy	Status	Trump Administration action	Estimated emissions impact if Trump Administration action is implemented (as compared to current policy scenario)
Clean Power Plan (CPP)	Rollback completed	Replacement in July, 2019 (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2019a)	No effect. Even without the policy the cost reduction of gas and renewables in the power sector lead to overachievement of the 32% emissions reduction goal in the sector compared to 2005 levels, that was envisaged by the CPP (U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2019)
Energy Conservation Standards for General Service Lamps (GSL)	Rollback completed	Will not enforce (U.S. Department of Energy, 2019)	Cumulative + 100 MtCO ₂ e through 2020-2028, no effect in 2030, policy rollback only postpones the development (CAT calculations)
Significant New Alternatives Policy (SNAP) Programme	Rollback completed	Will not enforce (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2018a)	+ 78–101 MtCO ₂ e/yr in 2030 (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2015)
CAFE standards for light duty vehicles	In-process	Proposal to freeze standards at 2020 levels (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency et al., 2018)	+22–76 MtCO ₂ e/yr in 2030 (Climate Action Tracker, 2017b)
Oil and Natural Gas Sector: Emission Standards for New, Reconstructed, and Modified Sources	In-process	Proposal to modify standards (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2018b)	+9.2 MtCO ₂ e/yr in 2030 (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2016)

Source: Climate Action Tracker, <https://climateactiontracker.org/press/effect-of-the-us-withdrawal-from-the-paris-agreement/>

⁵⁰ Michael R. Pompeo, *On the U.S. Withdrawal from the Paris Agreement*, Press Statement, November 4, 2019, <https://www.state.gov/on-the-u-s-withdrawal-from-the-paris-agreement/> accessed May 30, 2020.

⁵¹ Ursula von der Leyen, *Political guidelines*, p. 6., *loc. cit.*

⁵² Paola Tamma, Kalina Oroschakoff, *US withdrawal from Paris climate agreement greeted with EU shrug*, November 14, 2019, <https://www.politico.eu/article/donald-trump-us-withdrawal-from-paris-climate-agreement-greeted-with-eu-shrug/>, accessed May 30, 2020.

⁵³ Alex Johnson, *US FORMALLY REQUESTS TO WITHDRAW FROM PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT*, November 5, 2019, <https://www.greens-efa.eu/en/article/press/us-formally-requests-to-withdraw-from-paris-climate-agreement/>, accessed May 30, 2020.

As an observation, there were two opposite effects which cancelled each other out. Higher emissions generated by the aforementioned initiatives have been broadly compensated by a lower level forecast in the electricity generation sector. This was caused by a changing power generation mix, with increased use of gas and more affordable renewables, continuing to replace coal, the U.S. Energy Information Administration noted in the Annual Energy Outlook 2020.⁵⁴ The trend was the same in the 2019, as presented in the annual report.⁵⁵

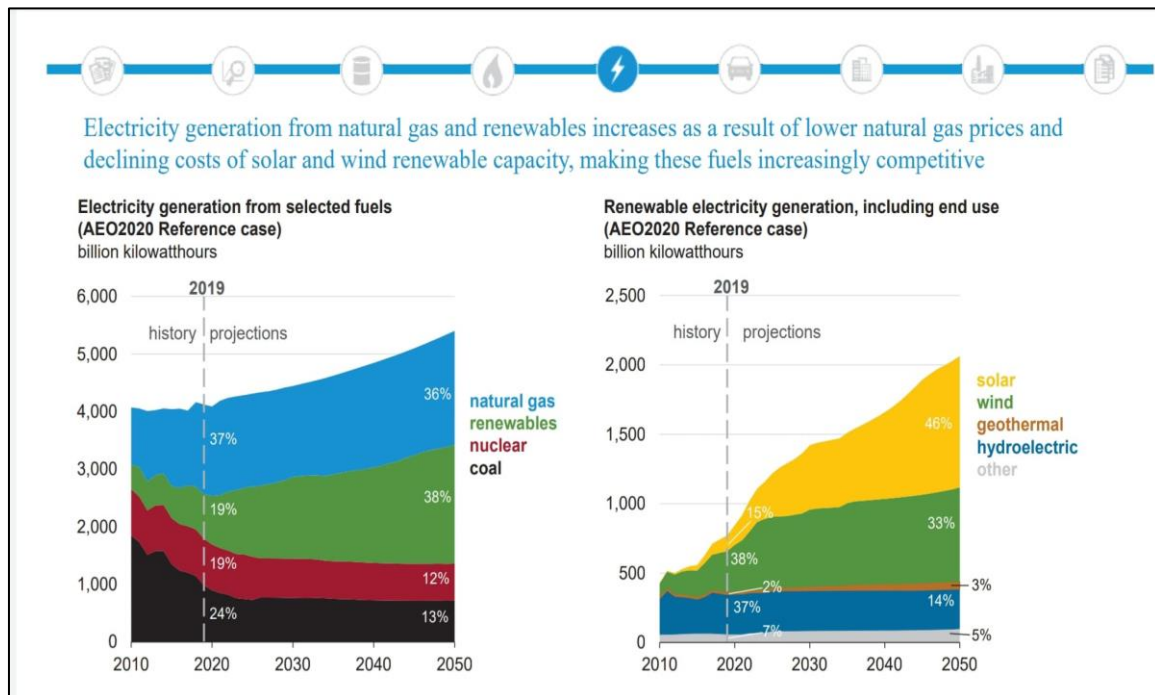


Fig. 4.6.1. Electricity generation from selected fuels and renewable (US)

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, <https://www.eia.gov/outlooks/aeo/pdf/AEO2020%20Full%20Report.pdf>

The press statement on the U.S.'s withdrawal from the accord (November 4, 2019) delivered a reassuring closing remark to their "friends" in the international community, on matters of multilateral engagement in environmental issues: "In international climate discussions, we will continue to offer a realistic and pragmatic model – backed by a record of real-world results – showing innovation and open markets lead to greater prosperity, fewer emissions, and more secure sources of energy. We will continue to work with our global partners to enhance resilience to the impacts of climate change and prepare for and respond to natural disasters. Just as we have in the past, the United States will continue to research, innovate, and grow our economy while reducing emissions and extending a helping hand to our friends and partners around the globe"⁵⁶.

Starting with 2020, as Joe Biden became the new President of the United States, time had come again to build upon a joint transatlantic engagement on environmental matters. In his first day at the White House, he reinstated the US to the Paris Accord.⁵⁷

As concluding remarks, over the years, the EU-US energy cooperation has been growingly active. International institutional frameworks where the two had been involved and transatlantic bilateral forums have

⁵⁴ U.S. Energy Information Administration U.S. Energy Information, Office of Energy Analysis
U.S. Department of Energy, *Annual Energy Outlook 2020 with projections to 2050*, Washington, D.C., January 29, 2020, p. 62, <https://www.eia.gov/outlooks/aeo/pdf/AEO2020%20Full%20Report.pdf>, accessed May 30, 2020.

⁵⁵ Idem, *Annual Energy Outlook 2019 with projections to 2050*, January 24, 2019, p.21, <https://www.eia.gov/outlooks/aeo/pdf/aeo2019.pdf>, accessed May 30, 2020.

⁵⁶ Michael R. Pompeo, *loc. cit.*

⁵⁷ Matt McGrath, *US rejoins Paris accord: Biden's first act sets tone for ambitious approach*, February 19, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-55732386>, accessed May 5, 2023.

laid the foundation for concrete steps to guarantee security of supply and to promote sustainable and competitive global energy markets. Trends in American LNG imports into the EU have been popular beginning with 2016.

The US has also contributed to the effective construction of pipelines interconnecting EU countries, such as the BRUA pipeline. From a geopolitical and geo-economic perspective, this project attracting gas from the Southern Corridor (or the Black Sea) was regarded as a competitor to North Stream 2, the completion of which was a Russian Gazprom's "clear European priority"⁵⁸. Berlin-Moscow energy cooperation was affected by the Russian invasion in Ukraine. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz suspended the approval of Nord Stream 2 project on February 22, 2022, in response to Russia's recognition of the republics of Luhansk and Donetsk.⁵⁹ The explosions that occurred in September 2022 at different points of the Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2 pipelines were responsible for serious gas leaks in the Baltic Sea and the EU considered this event a sabotage targeting its energy infrastructure.⁶⁰ Despite several investigations, no concrete evidence was found regarding the source of the incident. Gas imports from Russia through Nord Stream pipeline stopped after the damage.

When it comes to environmental policies, history has registered slightly different tendencies on the two sides of the Atlantic, especially under the Trump Administration. Considering that "the EU's emissions account for only about 9 percent of global emissions and, therefore Europe, by itself, can only make a relatively small contribution to putting the planet on a sustainable path toward climate neutrality"⁶¹, GMFUS Senior Fellow Douglas Hengel argued that "the European Green Deal brings both opportunities and challenges for the broader U.S.-EU cooperation"⁶², as the EU advanced two main proposals for addressing carbon-leakage, that could be potentially problematic for transatlantic relations.

Firstly, the EU will only negotiate comprehensive trade deals with Parties to the Paris Agreement. Trade policy was particularly pointed out by the European Commission as having the potential to support the EU's "ecological transition"⁶³. Provided "international partners do not share the same ambition (on climate) as the EU, there is a risk of carbon leakage, either because production is transferred from the EU to other countries with lower ambition for emission reduction, or because EU products are replaced by more carbon-intensive imports. If this risk materializes, there will be no reduction in global emissions, and this will frustrate the efforts of the EU and its industries to meet the global climate objectives of the Paris Agreement"⁶⁴.

Secondly, the European Commission initiative to develop a "carbon border adjustment" (CBA) mechanism meant to diminish the risk of carbon leakage was feared by the Americans not to convert into another protectionist tariff, adding "a carbon price to products imported into the EU to level the playing field between domestic producers facing costly climate measures and foreign producers facing less stringent requirements"⁶⁵.

⁵⁸ Nolan Theisen, John Szabo, *Black Sea natural gas games: A fork in the road for the BRUA Pipeline project*, March, 29, 2019, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/energysource/black-sea-natural-gas-games-a-fork-in-the-road-for-the-brua-pipeline-project/>, accessed June 2, 2020.

⁵⁹ Philip Oltermann, *Germany halts Nord Stream 2 approval over Russian recognition of Ukraine 'republics'*, Feb 22, 2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/feb/22/germany-halts-nord-stream-2-approval-over-russian-recognition-of-ukraine-republics>, accessed May 4, 2023.

⁶⁰ Merlyn Thomas, Elsa Maishman, *Nord Stream leaks: Sabotage to blame, says EU*, September 28, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-63057966>, accessed May 4, 2023.

⁶¹ Douglas Hengel, *The European Green Deal Brings Opportunities and Challenges for U.S.-EU Cooperation*, February 5, 2020, <https://www.gmfus.org/blog/2020/02/05/european-green-deal-brings-opportunities-and-challenges-us-eu-cooperation>, accessed June 2, 2020.

⁶² *Ibidem*.

⁶³ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁴ European Commission, *The European Green Deal, COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS*, Brussels, 11.12.2019, p. 6, https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/european-green-deal-communication_en.pdf, accessed June 2, 2020.

⁶⁵ Douglas Hengel, *The European Green Deal Brings Opportunities and Challenges for U.S.-EU Cooperation*, loc. cit.

The European Commission has targeted the CBA measure at several sectors, among which steel, cement, and chemicals are potentially considered, though not already defined as such.⁶⁶ A measure like this could be received with strong opposition in the US and it will support further the previous trade rows that have affected transatlantic economic engagement lately.

In the most optimistic scenario, the launch of the European Green Deal should be appealed to by the EU and the US in order “to enhance their already strong cooperation on the technologies essential to decarbonization”⁶⁷, Hengel adds. Like in a spiral, joints efforts on these matters would help bolstering transatlantic progress in the clean-energy competition with China, his argument goes.

The war in Ukraine determined the EU to come up with initiatives to diversify its natural gas supply sources and speed up its green transition thus reducing dependence on the Russian fossil fuels. It is the case of the REPowerEU project, introduced by the European Commission on May 18, 2022.⁶⁸ Among the short-term measures it listed:

- purchasing gas, LNG and hydrogen via the EU Energy Platform for all the EU countries willing to participate and for Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and the Western Balkans; Along with an enhanced cooperation with countries in the Caspian and Middle Eastern regions, LNG imports from the US and Canada and pipeline and LNG gas from Norway are also considered;
- concluding new energy partnerships;
- promptly introducing solar and wind energy projects;
- approval of first EU-wide hydrogen projects.

Medium-terms actions to be put in place by 2027 include national REPowerEU Plans supported by the Recovery and Resilience Fund, accelerating decarbonization in the industry sector, shifting the 2030 renewables target from 40% to 45%, a modern regulatory framework for hydrogen.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁸ European Commission, *REPowerEU: affordable, secure and sustainable energy for Europe*, https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/repowereu-affordable-secure-and-sustainable-energy-europe_en, accessed May 4, 2023.

⁶⁹ *Ibidem*.

CHAPTER 5.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES TO MODERN SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS: THE EVOLUTION OF TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION FOR GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

This chapter discusses the progressive EU-US security and defense cooperation, weighing up the opportunities and challenges to the transatlantic bilateral relation in the post-Cold War environment. To this end, we have followed interactions chronologically, mostly from a European (Union) perspective, assessing them against the main official joint commitments made by European and American partners, as well as individually driven actions of each, according with the evolution of events in the international system.

Research on this field has so far observed a gradual ambition of the European leaders to develop a European Defense and Security Identity (EDSI, later transformed into the CFSP) – theoretically meant to both consolidate the EU's own military capabilities and to strengthen the European arm within NATO -, as well as an EU "strategic autonomy", especially on the wave of unpredictability spurred by the US current administration.

The EU's multilateralist approach to security has many times conflicted with the US' preference for unilateralism and request for preeminence in intervention, although the truth is, military capabilities between the two vary to a significant extent, with the US having a more developed hard power. The curve went up and down, with an equilibrium moment during the Obama administration, to potentially return to its pre-2009 trend, as the US presidential discourse seemed to review the old American inwards orientation under the Donald Trump mandate at the White House.

5.1. PREMISES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY

Compared to the previous decades since the inception of NATO as the referential security framework (1949), post-Cold War transatlantic military relations unveiled a more integrative approach to safeguard peace, security and territorial integrity, through responsible cooperation and mutual engagement of the EU (including Eastern and Central European countries) and the US. However, the step-by-step development of European defense capabilities will have been both welcomed and questioned to a certain extent in American political circles, depending on its perceived ability to challenge or duplicate NATO's prototype.

The North Atlantic Alliance adapted to the new security environment, "to reflect the new, more promising, era in Europe"¹, marked by the fall of the communist regimes, the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact and the prospects for democracy and development lying ahead. Launching the New Strategic Concept (NSC) at the Rome Summit in 1991 meant a reaffirming of the Alliance's basic principles (including collective security) and its preeminence as the main institutional pillar to address security issues-by both political and military means-, while also designing "a broad approach to security"², to protect peace "in a new Europe"³, the official document reads.

Stressing the continuous relevance of the Western Alliance for the European security after the dissolution of the former USSR, from the Alliance's NSC (November 7, 1991), we understood that "with the radical changes in the security situation, the opportunities for achieving Alliance objectives through political

¹ NATO, *The Alliance's New Strategic Concept*, Nov.7, 1991,
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_23847.htm?, accessed June 10, 2020.

² *Ibidem*.

³ *Ibidem*.

means are greater than ever before”⁴. The document underlined the political, economic, social, and environmental implications of a comprehensive transatlantic security strategy.

As NATO emerged as the main institutional actor to engage in broader European security arrangements⁵, the three pillars of the Allied security policy - diplomatic dialogue, co-operation, and collective defence capability - were designed “to reduce the risks of conflict arising out of misunderstanding or design; to build increased mutual understanding and confidence among all European states; to help manage crises affecting the security of the Allies; and to expand the opportunities for a genuine partnership among all European countries in dealing with common security problems”⁶.

Dialogue and co-operation could be upheld by strengthening arms control and disarmament policies, the New Strategic Concept underlined. The North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) was founded on 20 December 1991 as a platform for dialogue and cooperation with ex-socialist states. It will have paved the route for the latter Partnership for Peace (PfP), established in 1994, to offer partners the possibility to engage with NATO on a practical, bilateral basis, prioritizing their interests to cooperate.⁷

Implying the benefits of the multilateralist approach in international relations, the Alliance’s discourse supported democratic institutions and it recognized the valuable contribution of the European Community and the CSCE, their complementary role and that of NATO, respectively.⁸

The voice of the former European Community’s political leadership to contribute jointly to the Allied efforts on matters of security and defense was heard from 1989 onwards, as exemplified by the Jacques Delors’s speech delivered to the Council of Europe on September 26, 1989.

The Treaty of Maastricht marked a cornerstone in the European Union’s progress towards a stable, regional and international security partner, fuelling to some extent prospects for future contribution to the vigor of the North Atlantic Alliance, by consolidating the European structure and resource management. Joachim Bitterlich, Member of the Board of Directors of the Jacques Delors Institute remarked that “in 1991 we negotiated and finalized the Maastricht Treaty, a real achievement and step forward in European integration, but the nascent European Union was still a << limping union >> due to the resistance of the UK and others”⁹.

Introducing the CFSP pillar to its basic architecture, along with Justice and Home Affairs (JHA), the EU leaders set among core objectives the implementation of CFSP, envisaging the possibility to subsequently frame a common defence policy, leading to a much broader accomplishment, a European common defence¹⁰.

Nevertheless, the institutionalization of the CFSP resulted out of a political compromise between two divergent perspectives on the EU political and security strategy: the Atlanticist perspective (supported by the UK, the Netherlands), allowing the EU to “request” the Western European Union (established in 1954) to implement its decisions¹¹, and the Europeanist perspective (supported by France, Germany, Belgium, and Luxemburg)¹² prompting to give the EU the political authority to instruct the WEU.¹³ The British and the Dutch highlighted the important U.S. military involvement in Europe and did not resist the Americans about the future of NATO.¹⁴

⁴ NATO, *The Alliance's NSC*, loc. cit.

⁵ John Peterson, Helene Sjursen, *op. cit.*, p.101.

⁶ NATO, *The Alliance's NSC*, loc. cit.

⁷ NATO, *North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) (Archived)*, last updated 30 Jan. 2017, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_69344.htm, accessed June 15, 2020.

⁸ NATO, *The Alliance's NSC*, loc. cit.

⁹ JOACHIM BITTERLICH, *REFLECTIONS ON “THE END OF THE COLD WAR?”*, November 9, 2019, p.3, https://institutdelors.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/AD_191109_Guerre-froide_Bitterlich.pdf, accessed June 21, 2020.

¹⁰ Official Journal of the European Communities, *TREATY ON EUROPEAN UNION*, loc.cit., p.4.

¹¹ Peterson, Sjursen, *op. cit.*, p.99.

¹² Ana-Maria Stoian, *op. cit.*, p. 30

¹³ Peterson, Sjursen, *op. cit.*, p.100.

¹⁴ William Drozdiak, Europe Disunited in Gulf Response, *Washington Post*, Feb. 19, 1991, at A6.

From a German perspective, Joachim Bitterlich noted that: “For Kohl, the euro was the necessary << cement >> to bind the EU tighter and indissolubly together. His credo was that Economic and Monetary Union - and Political Union - would make the European integration << irreversible>>”¹⁵.

Any measures to improve European policies and mechanisms of cooperation should have been taken by closely considering and applying the provisions of the “acquis communautaire”, the Maastricht Treaty stipulated.¹⁶ The European Council was in charge to draw the CFSP rules.

By resorting to the will, permanent consultation and shared efforts of sovereign countries, the CFSP was designed “to safeguard the common values, fundamental interests and independence of the Union”¹⁷ and its Member States, to strengthen security, including its international dimension, “to preserve peace, to promote international cooperation, and to develop and consolidate democracy and the rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms”¹⁸. We identify here similar aspirations as /correlations with those exposed in NATO’s NSC of 1991.

While not affecting the specificity of the Member States’ security and defence policies, the EU policy should respect their particular “obligations under the North Atlantic Treaty and be compatible with the common security and defence policy established within that framework”¹⁹. Moreover, provisions of the EU Treaty shall not impede “closer cooperation between two or more Member States on a bilateral level”²⁰, in the WEU or NATO format, as long as it does not contradict or hamper common European actions resulting from specific provisions enshrined in the Maastricht Treaty.²¹

Embracing multilateralism, EU members represented in international organizations (UNSC) or conferences where not all EU countries take part should inform the latter of any aspects of common interest, the document reads.²²

The WEU functioned as the Union’s “defense arm”, bridging gaps between the EU and NATO.²³ Signed on 19 June 1992, near Bonn, the Petersberg Declaration favored enhanced European defence capabilities, introducing a new status for the WEU. This role covered a series of tasks: humanitarian missions, peacekeeping operations, and the deployment of troops in crisis management. The Petersberg Tasks will have been lately incorporated into the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) as part of the EU Treaty.²⁴

The new European legislation will have also confronted the need to clarify further the EU-WEU relation (Member States opinions’ on the WEU potentially being absorbed into the EU were divergent) and to resolve other sensitive aspects not previously addressed with regard to the Atlanticist-Europeanist compromise.²⁵ Accordingly, in his discourse at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (1993), Jacques Delors pledged for a further clarification of the WEU’s status and its relation with the EU and NATO, as described in the Maastricht Treaty.²⁶

Authors like Rühle and Williams have described post-Cold-War security arrangements as forging a system of “interlocking institutions” (bounding the OSCE, NATO, the WEU/CFSP and the EU), establishing a higher degree of interdependence and a more flexible, yet cohesive relationship, enabling Europeans to opt

¹⁵ BITTERLICH, loc.cit.

¹⁶ Official Journal of the European Communities, *TREATY ON EUROPEAN UNION*, p.4.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 58.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p.59.

²⁰ *Ibidem*.

²¹ *Ibidem*.

²² *Ibidem*.

²³ Ana-Maria Stoian, *op. cit.*, p.31.

²⁴ Oxford Reference, *Petersberg Declaration/Tasks- QUICK REFERENCE*, <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100320119>, accessed June 17, 2020.

²⁵ Peterson, Sjursen, *op. cit.*, p.99.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p.101.

for either an autonomous or an Atlantic basis for action, as the duplication costs would have been enormous and it was also not a desired state end, according to the theoretical principle of complementarity.²⁷

Balancing perspectives, in spite of the publicly declared aim of not competing with each other but rather be mutually reinforcing organizations, Forster and Wallace have argued that such interlocking institutions can also be subject to blockages, as the division of tasks can eventually end by being replaced by competition for control.²⁸

The authors noted that the compromise on task distribution remained rather problematic, the EU and NATO/the US being forced to a process of “learning by doing”, detrimental to both sides’ efficient security policy planning and implementation.²⁹ Indicative for such difficulties, generated by unresolved overlapping competencies, was the European and American assignation to monitor the UN embargo in the Adriatic in 1992, rising tensions between NATO and the WEU.³⁰ Besides this, frictions were also recorded during joint NATO-WEU council meetings, as representatives from the same countries in both organizations sometimes argued over policy decisions or the distribution of responsibilities within the two separate institutions.³¹

Although immediately after the Cold War transatlantic allies agreed upon their separate responsibilities, with NATO largely assuming the task of ensuring collective defense, while the WEU was going to support peacekeeping operations and crisis management, introducing the concept of Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF) – launched in late 1993 and endorsed at the NATO Summit in Brussels in January 1994 -, has changed the situation to a significant extent, fueling questions about overlapping attributions between the Europeans and the Americans.

The US did not initially envisage the CJTF as available for WEU operations, but France saw them, under the political authority of the European Council, as an opportunity for European states to get access to and make use of NATO’s communications systems, infrastructure, intelligence and early warning systems in undertaking specific peacekeeping missions or crisis management actions. Put simply, the French envisioned a direct connection between the development of an ESDI endorsed by the WEU and the efforts to consolidate a European pillar within NATO, whereas others (the US) did not identified the WEU’s relation with the EU as automatically connection with its involvement under the NATO umbrella.³²

Lacking a common strong defense policy, the Persian Gulf War has unfortunately surprised European states unable to agree upon and coordinate a joint, collective (military) response to the crisis, while the US took on the hard power leadership in the region, under NATO auspices. On August 10, 1990, the EC condemned the annexation of Kuwait by Iraq, declaring it as “contrary to international law and therefore null and void, according with the United Nations Security Council Resolution No. 662”³³. Also, an embargo on European oil imports from Iraq and Kuwait was put in place.

Despite the fact that, on December 12, 1990, the European Parliament voted for no military intervention as long as there were prospects of peaceful resolution to the crisis³⁴, individual European countries, like France and Britain, based on their perceived national interests and UNSC permanent membership, had contributed with military forces in the Gulf conflict zone.³⁵ Germany, on the other hand, proved to be more pacifist, refraining from sending troops in Kuwait.

²⁷ Michael Rühle, Nick Williams, “Partnership for Peace after NATO enlargement”, in *European security*, vol.5, No.4, 1996, pp.521-528.

²⁸ Anthony Forster, William Wallace, “Common Foreign and Security Policy: A New Policy or Just a New Name?”, in Helen Wallace and William Wallace (eds.), *Policy-Making in the European Union*, Oxford: OUP, 1996.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 428-433.

³⁰ Jopp, 1997, p.158.

³¹ Peterson, Sjursen, *op. cit.*, pp.102-103.

³² *Ibidem*, pp.101-103.

³³ *Statements by the Community and its Member States at Political Cooperation Meetings*, 1990, Bulletin of the European Communities. 97 (No. s).

³⁴ *Gulf Crisis: Euro-MPs Say No Military Action While There is a Prospect of a Peaceful Solution*, Eur. Rep., Dec. 19, 1990, (LEXIS, Nexis library, Omni file).

³⁵ Whitney, Craig R., Gulf Fighting Shatters Europeans' Fragile Unity, in the *N.Y. Times*, Jan. 25, 1991, p. 11.

As the Iraqi forces disregarded the UNSC January 15, 1991 deadline to liberate Kuwait, the allied coalition initiated the bombing operation over the city of Baghdad, as of January 16, 1991, destroying Iraqi military and communications equipment. The Americans, British and French have contributed with warplanes while the WEU as a whole has coordinated the Europeans' naval operations. The actual ground conflict did not last too much before large numbers of Iraqi troops surrendered.³⁶

Addressing the European Parliament on January 23, 1991, Jacques Delors remarked with regard to European involvement in the Persian Gulf: "Public opinion sensed that Europe was rather ineffectual"³⁷. On the same note, the then President of the Council of The European Union, Jacques Poos, argued that the conflict experience "should act as a stimulus toward greater political union"³⁸.

5.2. TOWARDS A EUROPEAN DEFENSE AND SECURITY POLICY

Tensions in the Former Yugoslavia (1991-2001) have again pointed to the fragility of an EU collective enterprise, which added to the broader European-American divergences about military cooperation, highlighting the different *modus operandi* of the two. In a scenario similar to the one in the case of the Gulf crisis, if the EU supported using diplomacy tools and exercising political pressure, the Americans preferred resorting to military force at a much earlier stage. EU-US distinct approaches blocking a concerted transatlantic reaction were mainly related to the peace process and the embargo on Bosnia.

The EU's common foreign policy failed towards a joint approach and intervention in Bosnia as EU countries continued to perceive themselves as individual actors in the international arena. Thus, Great European Powers (France, Great Britain and Germany) have taken action outside the EU framework. The states particularly affected have considered getting involved outside the CFSP framework, through one-time arrangements like the Contact Group and the RRF.³⁹

By the time the Dayton Agreement was signed (November 1, 1995), the Clinton administration decided that Europeans could simply not cope with the situation and that the Americans had to take the lead, under the NATO umbrella.⁴⁰

The NATO ministerial meeting in Berlin (June 3, 1996) provided the official framework to agree that the WEU would be responsible for the creation of an ESDI within NATO structures. Approving an overall political-military configuration for the CJTF concept⁴¹, the CJTFs could have now been available to the WEU, enabling it to conduct "separable, but not separate"⁴² military operations (where NATO decided not to intervene) without the US involvement, while having the opportunity to access NATO's operational

³⁶ Rick Atkinson, Dan Balz, "Allied Forces Invade Kuwait As Bush Orders Ground War", in *The Washington Post*, Feb. 24, 1991, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1991/02/24/allied-forces-invade-kuwait-as-bush-orders-ground-war/f4ddde2c-8df2-4101-8e92-32b9765bc8b7/>, accessed July 20, 2020.

³⁷ *Political Union: Gulf War Darkens Prospects for EEC Institutional Reforms*, Eur. Rep., Jan. 26, 1991, (LEXIS, Nexis library, Omni file).

³⁸ Goldsmith, *EC Says Common Foreign Policy Should Proceed, But Slowly*, UPI, Feb. 4, 1991, (LEXIS, Nexis library, Omni file).

³⁹ Jacques Santer, "The EU's Security and Defence Policy. How to Avoid Missing the 1996 rendezvous", in *NATO Review*, November 1995, p. 6. Cfr. also Andreas G. Kinitis, *The EU's Foreign Policy and the War in Former Yugoslavia*, unpublished manuscript, 1996.

⁴⁰ Michael Cox, "Beyond the West: Terrors in Transatlantia", in *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol.11, 2005, p.212.

⁴¹ INFO PRESS, *THE COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCES CONCEPT*, <https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/1999/9904-wsh/pres-eng/16cjtf.pdf>, accessed June 17, 2020.

⁴² NATO PRESS AND MEDIA SERVICE, *MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL IN BERLIN- FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ*, 3 JUNE 1996, http://archives.nato.int/uploads/r/null/1/4/143674/M_NAC_1_96_63_ENG.pdf, accessed June 20, 2020.

capabilities if deemed necessary⁴³, still based on case-by-case decisions by the North Atlantic Council (NAC).⁴⁴

As a general observation, as enshrined in the Amsterdam Treaty, while calling for the progressive framing of a European common defense policy, the WEU continued to represent the “defense arm” of the EU and its bridge towards the North Atlantic Alliance. It intermediated further EU-NATO cooperation, and by 1997 its connections with NATO had grown even further, rather than with the EU itself⁴⁵, although the Treaty was stipulating the development of EU's closer ties with WEU. The Treaty of Amsterdam introduced the function of HR, to be exercised by the Secretary-General of the Council.

In his May 1998 Colloquy, former WEU Secretary General and then NATO Secretary General, Javier Solana, pointing to the internal divergences between EU Members, argued that the process of developing a more coherent European security policy was marked by ups and downs, by doubts rather than confidence.⁴⁶

He was nevertheless optimistic affirming that “Our support for ESDI and for WEU-led operation is coming to fruition in political and practical terms. (...) A European Security and Defence Identity within the Alliance is a prerequisite for the future of a vibrant NATO, a NATO for the 21st century. (...) If we succeed in mastering the challenge of creating this European personality, we will have achieved far more than a more coherent contribution to European security. We will also have made a major contribution to a more mature and balanced transatlantic relationship. Indeed, only a stronger Europe will help ensure the continued US commitment to European security. Only a stronger Europe can become the strategic partner North America seeks for managing global security challenges. (...) To rebalance this relationship between North America and Europe, Europe has to deliver”⁴⁷.

The war in Kosovo (February 1998 – 11 June 1999) unveiled the same heterogeneous approaches by the EU and the US, respectively. As the crisis escalated during the winter of 1998 and European diplomatic efforts failed, it was again the United States that led the Allied Force Operation, under NATO command, where, however, not all the Alliance's members took part. The management of the Kosovo crisis has opened up the path to the evolution of the transatlantic alliance towards the so-called “coalition of the willing”⁴⁸.

With the occasion of the NATO Summit in Washington, a new Strategic Concept was launched. It identified new types of “risks to the Euro-Atlantic peace and stability, including oppression, ethnic conflict, economic distress, the collapse of political order, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction”.⁴⁹

Admitting that “a new Europe of greater integration is emerging”⁵⁰ and restating support for “the development of the ESDI within the Alliance progresses by making available its assets and capabilities for WEU-led operations”⁵¹, reinforcing the political and military means of the NATO's traditional doctrine, the 1999 Strategic Concept strengthened the idea of indivisibility between the security of Europe and that of North America. And thus, the Alliance's pledge to preserve the transatlantic connection and the viability of the collective defence concept are fundamental to NATO's credibility and to the Euro-Atlantic security.⁵²

⁴³Peterson, Sjursen, *op. cit.*, p.102.

⁴⁴ INFO PRESS, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁵ Peterson, Sjursen, *op. cit.*, p.101.

⁴⁶ NATO, *A European Security and Defence Identity within NATO, Remarks by NATO Secretary General, Dr. Javier Solana*, Madrid, 4 May 1998, <https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/1998/s980504a.htm>, ACCESSED June 17, 2020

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁸ John E. Peters, Stuart Johnson, Nora Bensahel, Timothy Liston, Traci Williams, *European Contribution to Operation Allied Force: Implication for Transatlantic Cooperation*, RAND, Santa Monica, 2001, p.102.

⁴⁹ NATO, *The Alliance's Strategic Concept*, April 21, 1999, Washington, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_27433.htm, accessed June 21, 2020.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*.

⁵² *Ibidem*.

In response to the armed conflict in Kosovo, the Saint-Malo Declaration upheld “making a reality of the Treaty of Amsterdam”⁵³, by achieving complete and swift implementation of its CFSP provisions, including the “European Council’s responsibility to decide on the progressive conception of a common defence policy in the framework of CFSP”.⁵⁴

Pledging to contribute “to the vitality of a modernized Atlantic Alliance”⁵⁵, the engagements subscribed to by NATO Member States will have to be maintained, while reinforcing EU’s internal solidarity (considering “the various positions of European states” and the “situations of countries in relation to NATO”⁵⁶), the Declaration read.

A crucial commitment in the Saint-Malo Declaration envisaged enhanced competences for the EU on matters where the Alliance as a whole was not to be involved that is the capacity to decide and act autonomously, helped by credible military forces, when managing international crises.⁵⁷ In order to avoid any duplication of roles, the EU must employ proper military means, either in the form of WEU assets “pre-designated within NATO’s European pillar or national or multinational European means outside the NATO framework”⁵⁸.

However, the American political response to the Franco-British declaration didn’t cease to appear. Reiterating transatlantic common efforts deployed in order to develop an ESDI within the Alliance, as the “US welcomes a more capable European partner”⁵⁹, Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, in her remarks to the NAC ministerial meeting in Brussels (December 8, 1998), any practical military initiative must avoid “preempting Alliance decision-making by de-linking ESDI from NATO, avoid duplicating existing efforts, and avoid discriminating against non-EU members”⁶⁰. This has remained in the IR language as the “3Ds” formula.

In his May 5, 1999 speech, European Commission President Jacques Santer stressed that “the European Union must learn to speak with one voice (...)”⁶¹, and that it must adopt “a solid stance”, as the Kosovo crisis was a good reminder of the imperative for Europeans to shape a common defence identity.⁶²

Stressing the importance of TEP and TAP, the conclusions of the Presidency of the European Council (June 1999) found that “developing the transatlantic relationship is fundamental to international stability and for ensuring that problems in relations are resolved in a mutually satisfactory way”⁶³. Also, in the same official format, the EU 15 reinforced the CFSP.

The tragic 9/11 events will have presented new challenges for the Euro-Atlantic security cooperation environment and prospects for cooperation in specific areas (such as fighting terrorism and organized crime), concomitantly with the development of the EU’s own security and defense policy.

⁵³ Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom, *Joint Declaration on European Defence. Joint Declaration issued at the British-French Summit, Saint-Malo, 3-4 December 1998*, https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/franco_british_st_malo_declaration_4_december_1998-en-f3cd16fb-fc37-4d52-936f-c8e9bc80f24f.html, accessed June 21, 2020.

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁹ Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, *Statement to the North Atlantic Council, Brussels, Belgium, December 8, 1998*, <https://1997-2001.state.gov/statements/1998/981208.html>, accessed June 21, 2020.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁶¹ European Commission, *Speech by Mr Jacques Santer President of the European Commission "Outlook for the Cologne European Council and institutional reform" in the Plenary session of the European Parliament, Strasbourg, 5 May 1999*, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_99_72, accessed June 21, 2020.

⁶² *Ibidem*.

⁶³ COLOGNE EUROPEAN COUNCIL, *CONCLUSIONS OF THE PRESIDENCY*, 3 - 4 June 1999, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/kol1_en.htm#V, accessed June 21, 2020.

5.3. REACHING THE PEAK IN TRANSATLANTIC SECURITY AND DEFENSE TENSIONS. FRAMING THE EU COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENSE POLICY

Diplomatically speaking, the 2001 EU-US Summit in Göteborg (June 14, 2001) reaffirmed the traditional historic partnership and the shared fundamental values of the transatlantic relation⁶⁴. The Summit Statement clearly reiterated the determination to tighten the transatlantic bond to better respond to the complex global challenges.⁶⁵

On the contrary, in reality, divergent European and American perspectives on crucial issues on the global agenda like the Kyoto Protocol, the ICC or President Bush's plan to build an antiballistic missile shield in Eastern Europe (which will have come to fruition only in 2016) have fuelled a wave of skepticism in Europe towards the US new administration. On the US' withdrawing its signature from the ICC treaty, Kenneth Roth, executive director of Human Rights Watch, commented in 2002: "We see here a triumph of ideology over any rational assessment of how to combat the worst human rights crimes"⁶⁶.

More than that, reducing the bilateral EU-US bi-annual summits at only one meeting per year was considered a hint for the way in which the EU was actually perceived by the American partners during the first George Walker Bush Administration.⁶⁷ From an International Relations perspective, the divergent evolution of the EU and the US towards multilateralism versus unilateralism, respectively, will have grown more and more explicit, especially after the US's decision to intervene by military force in Iraq.

The EU's reaction to the terrorist attacks over World Trade Center and Pentagon in 2001 expressed solidarity with the cause and the US allies. Addressing the European Parliament on October 24, 2001, Romano Prodi declared that "we thus pledged our complete solidarity with the government and people of the United States"⁶⁸. NATO Members activated the Article 5 collective defense clause but the US framed the "war on terror" as an absolute priority of the current republican administration and initially decided to wage the war by themselves.

George H. Quester noted that "in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, the United States has gone much further than simply using the << realist >> vocabulary of << looking after its own national interest>>"⁶⁹, invoking their prerogative of "preemption", which meant almost the same as "preventive war", the author opinionated.

Instead of an EU concerted involvement in Afghanistan, the military response to the crisis was marked by rather bilateral US-EU countries cooperation. European troops rejoiced a more significant role after the occupation of Kabul, as the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) has been inaugurated, under the UN mandate. Beginning with August 11, 2003, it was NATO that took the lead of the ISAF mission "to assist the Afghan government in the maintenance of security in Kabul and its surrounding areas"⁷⁰, with further expansion outside of Kabul.

⁶⁴ European Commission, *GÖTEBORG STATEMENT, EU-U.S. SUMMIT Göteborg*, 14 June 2001, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/PRES_01_245, accessed June 21, 2020.

⁶⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁶ Human Rights Watch, *United States "Unsigning" Treaty on War Crimes Court*, May 6, 2002, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2002/05/06/united-states-unsigning-treaty-war-crimes-court>, accessed June 24, 2020.

⁶⁷ Stoian, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

⁶⁸ Romano Prodi, *Time for real solidarity*, Strasbourg, October 24, 2001, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/sept11/eu_020.asp, accessed June 21, 2020.

⁶⁹ George H. Quester, "The Bush Foreign Policy and The Good Society", in *The Good Society*, Volume 14, Number 3, 2005, p.17.

⁷⁰ NATO, *ISAF's mission in Afghanistan (2001-2014) (Archived)*, last updated: 01 Sep. 2015, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_69366.htm, accessed June 21, 2020.

Looking back to the evolution of the Middle East Quartet's (established in April 2002 and composed by the EU, Russia, the UN and the US) mission and activity, Nathalie Tocci concluded that a decade after its establishment, it has not managed to impose itself either as a effective multilateral, mediation forum in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Despite the fact that representatives have met on a regular basis (at senior level approximately four times per year and whenever needed in working groups), their initiatives "reflected either the EU's unsuccessful attempts to frame American initiatives within a multilateral setting, or the US's successful attempts at providing a multilateral cover for its unilateral actions"⁷¹.

On a similar note, a 2004 independent study commissioned by the European Commission argued that "numerous interviewees who have observed the Quartet described it as a primarily US/EU framework, when it is not entirely dominated by the US. The UN is viewed as representing the Arab world in the Quartet. Russia's role has been characterized as minimal and symbolic"⁷².

The 2002 EU-US Summit focused mainly on the fight against (financing) terrorism. Also, there was a "spill-over" effect from terrorism to other security or mobility-related fields. Frontier controls, collaboration on justice and criminal aspects, immigration and asylum policy were all included on the agenda of a wider transatlantic security policy.⁷³

As the comprehensive framework for cooperation provided by the Berlin Plus agreement (building upon the conclusions of NATO's 1999 Washington summit) was finalized in early 2003, it was set to improve the EU-NATO partnership in crisis management and peace-building actions. Moreover, it facilitated the EU's first military mission, Operation Concordia, in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) in December 2003.⁷⁴

Transatlantic solidarity was again shaken as a result of the US's firm stance to intervene militarily in Iraq, without a UN mandate and outside the NATO umbrella, on the previously appealed to "coalition of the willing". Based on the assumption that Iraq was possessing WMD and that it did not respect its disarmament obligations, the US-led coalition, codenamed Operation Iraqi Freedom, was meant to oust the Saddam Hussein regime.

The European Council reunited in Brussels (February 17, 2003) clearly expressed its option for the peaceful resolution of the conflict, as force is to be used "only as a last resort". Europeans declared themselves "committed to working with all our partners, especially the United States, for the disarmament of Iraq, for peace and stability in the region and for a decent future for its entire people"⁷⁵.

However, internal divisions within the EU have further destabilized the Union in the face of this new security crisis. If France, Germany, Belgium and Luxemburg, on one hand, opposed vehemently to the American intervention abroad, the UK, Spain, Italy, Denmark and other EU or NATO candidate countries, on the other, supported jointly the military response in Iraq, thus aligning to the US' military supremacy.

The EU reaction to this split over security and defense arrangements underlined the necessity of a joint strategic vision to improve internal cohesion. The European Security Strategy (ESS), drawn up by Javier

⁷¹ Nathalie Tocci, "The EU, the Middle East Quartet and (In)effective Multilateralism", in *Mercury Papers*, E-paper No.9, June 2011, p. 26, http://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/mercury-epaper_09.pdf, accessed June 22, 2020.

⁷² EUROPEAN COMMISSION DG External Relations Unit C1, *Review of the Framework for Relations between the European Union and the United States- AN INDEPENDENT STUDY*, 2004, p. 43, <https://www.statewatch.org/news/2007/dec/eu-us-relations-study.pdf>, accessed June 22, 2020.

⁷³ Monica DEN BOER, 9/11 AND THE EUROPEANISATION OF ANTI-TERRORISM POLICY: A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT, in *Policy Papers*, No.6, September 2003, <https://institutdelors.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/policypaper6.pdf>, accessed June 21, 2020.

⁷⁴ European External Action Service, *Shaping of a Common Security and Defence Policy*, https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/common-security-and-defence-policy-csdp/5388/shaping-of-a-common-security-and-defence-policy-_en, accessed June 21, 2020.

⁷⁵ Council of the European Union, *Conclusions of the EXTRAORDINARY EUROPEAN COUNCIL*, Brussels, 21 February 2003, pp. 1-2, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/20895/extraordinary-european-council-brussels-17-february-2003.pdf>, accessed June 21, 2020.

Solana and adopted by the European Council in Brussels on 12-13 December 2003, established the framework for the CFSP, including the future Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

Identifying key, interdependent security threats entailing a global dimension, the strategic document prioritized “the goal of strengthening the international rules-based order through effective multilateralism”⁷⁶. It called for a “more active, more coherent and more capable” Union, while not disregarding EU international cooperation, as global challenges cannot be addressed on an individual basis.⁷⁷

The Treaty of Lisbon amending and modifying the previous TEU and TFEU, has incorporated in its “Provisions on the CSDP” the ESDP/CSDP and all its subsequent refinements. It included a reciprocal assistance clause and it also foresaw the creation of a framework for Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) as an upper stage of the CSDP, the extension of the Petersberg tasks (“to include ‘joint disarmament operations, humanitarian and rescue tasks, military advice and assistance tasks, conflict prevention and peace-keeping tasks, tasks of combat forces in crisis management”⁷⁸), and the establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS), under the patronage of the HR of the EU.

5.4. PROSPECTS FOR CONVERGING EU-US POSITIONS. AN EU VISION FOR GLOBAL SECURITY⁷⁹

The EU-US security and defense cooperation has developed towards a better coordination process starting with 2009. Contrasting with the rather confrontational style of his predecessor in the White House, President Barack Obama’s new approach to Europe and European integration, his willingness to employ “soft power” tools alongside with the traditional military instruments the US possessed, “a radical shift from the neo-conservatives’ belief in America’s hegemony”⁸⁰, opened up enthusiasm for the EU’s vision of a international order framed in the spirit of multilateralism.

Introducing the broader (Obama’s) US’ vision of a globalised, interconnected society and their new perspective of the international community in international relations, Álvaro de Vasconcelos affirmed that, an important change in American foreign policy was the recognition - as apparently viable since the fall of the Berlin Wall - of the US as an European actor, interested in the EU’s unity and further integration.⁸¹

Discussing this generally positive trend – metaphorically denominated as the ‘Obama bounce’ and the transatlantic renaissance – Marcin Zaborowski said that “the Obama phenomenon has reversed a dramatic decline in America’s image and prestige in Europe during the Bush period and the Europeans are now again in love with America and open to its leadership”⁸².

In this context of revitalizing the transatlantic strategic security relation, the EU-US positions also needed to be revised and rebalanced, as, generally speaking, strategic dialogue was actually and mostly

⁷⁶ EEAS, *Shaping..., loc. cit.*

⁷⁷ *Ibidem.*

⁷⁸ EEAS, *Shaping..., loc. cit.*

⁷⁹ This subchapter has been previously published in Melania-Gabriela Ciot, Iulia-Anamaria Ghidui, “The US – Russia Relations and the EU’s Interest”, in Valentin Naumescu, Raluca Moldovan, Diana Petruț (eds.), *The EU and NATO Approaches to the Black Sea Region. Proceedings of the second edition of the international conference The European Union’s External Relations and the Perspectives of the Global Order (EUXGLOB)*, Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2022, pp. 321 - 342.

⁸⁰ Álvaro de Vasconcelos, “Introduction – Responding to the Obama moment: the EU and the US in a multipolar world”, in Álvaro de Vasconcelos, Marcin Zaborowski (eds.), *The Obama Moment-European and American perspectives*, EU Institute for Security Studies, 2009, pp.11-12, https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/The_Obama_Moment__web_A4_0.pdf, accessed June 22, 2020.

⁸¹ *Ibidem*, p. 15.

⁸² Marcin Zaborowski, “Capitalising on Obamamania: how to reform EU-US relations?”, in Álvaro de Vasconcelos, Marcin Zaborowski (eds.), *op.cit.*, p.230.

developing bilaterally, between individual (stronger) EU Member States and the US, causing resentments due to unequal engagement of the Union in its entirety.

In 2009, the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Relations recommended that the EU-US summits should be organized twice a year⁸³. Ironically, one year later leaders will have decided that these official encounters will not take place automatically anymore, but only when deemed necessary by the parts, on the basis that the transatlantic relation has evolved to that extent that it no longer need such political reconfirmation to take place yearly. With the occasion of the Brussels Forum in March 2010, the EU HR, Catherine Margaret Ashton, said that "We will have a summit when we both feel the need for one. Meanwhile, the relationship goes on"⁸⁴.

The creation of a Transatlantic Political Council to deal with foreign and security matters was another point raised by the EP in 2009. The council was thought to be chaired by the HR/VP of the Commission and by the US Secretary of State and to meet at least every three months.⁸⁵ It has not, however, materialized to date, though MEPs continued to pledge for it even in 2018, in the context of the new paradigm imposed by President Trump's America First policy.

After the Lisbon Treaty became effective, starting abruptly with the credo that "Defense matters"⁸⁶, the European Council reunited in Brussels discussed thoroughly in 2013 defence-related aspects and identified the main actions for enhanced EU cooperation, on three dimensions: "increasing the effectiveness, visibility and impact of CSDP, enhancing the development of capabilities and strengthening Europe's defence industry"⁸⁷. Conclusions of the Council reiterated the fully complementary character of the CFSP with regard to NATO, in the already accepted format of the transatlantic strategic partnership and compliant with the autonomous decision-making and procedures of each.⁸⁸

Based on the 2015 European Council mandate, the EU Global Strategy on foreign and security policy, as presented by HR Federica Mogherini, was adopted on 28 June 2016 at the European Council in Brussels, to replace the previous 2003 ESS and suit the need of a "credible and responsive Union". The strategy represented a step forward in the EU's struggle to sound "with a single voice" on important matters bearing a global impact. It addressed a wider range of security-related aspects, including cyber and energy security.

Invoking the concept of "strategic autonomy" and the necessity for the EU "to be strengthened as a security community"⁸⁹, while also cooperating with NATO ("the bedrock of Euro-Atlantic security for almost 70 years"⁹⁰), the EU Global Strategy stated: "As Europeans we must take greater responsibility for our security. We must be ready and able to deter, respond to, and protect ourselves against external threats. While NATO exists to defend its members – most of which are European – from external attack, Europeans must be better equipped, trained and organized to contribute decisively to such collective efforts, as well as to act autonomously if and when necessary. An appropriate level of ambition and strategic autonomy is important for Europe's ability to foster peace and safeguard security within and beyond its borders (...) A more credible European defence is essential also for the sake of a healthy transatlantic partnership with the United States"⁹¹.

⁸³ Committee on Foreign Affairs, European Parliament, *'Report on the state of transatlantic relations in the aftermath of the US election'*, 2008/2199(INI), (Rapporteur: Francisco José Millán Mon), Brussels, 23 March 2009.

⁸⁴ Valentina Pop, *EU-US summits to take place 'only when necessary'*, BRUSSELS, 27. MAR 2010, <https://euobserver.com/foreign/29782>, accessed June 22, 2020.

⁸⁵ Committee on Foreign Affairs, European Parliament, *Report on the state of transatlantic relations...*, loc. cit.

⁸⁶ European Council, *CONCLUSIONS of the EUROPEAN COUNCIL 19/20 DECEMBER 2013*, Brussels, 20 December 2013, p.1, <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-217-2013-INIT/en/pdf>, accessed June 22, 2020.

⁸⁷ *Ibidem*, p.2.

⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, p.2.

⁸⁹ Federica Mogherini, *Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe- A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign And Security Policy*, p. 20,

http://www.eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/top_stories/pdf/eugs_review_web.pdf, accessed June 22, 2020.

⁹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 36.

⁹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 19.

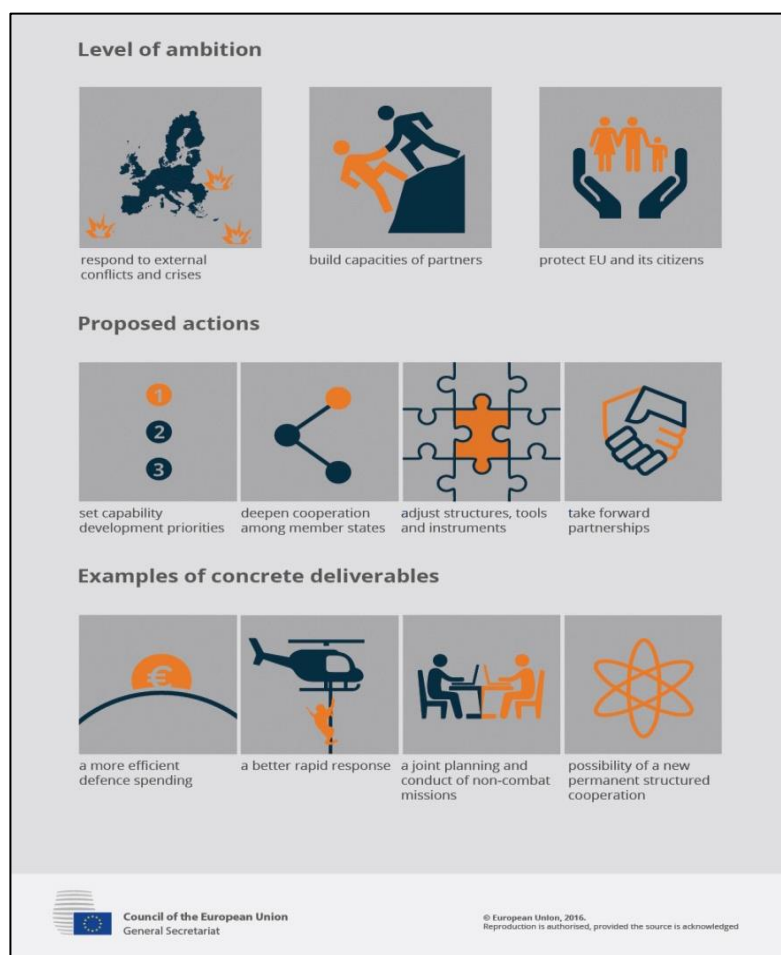


Fig.5.4.1. Infographic - EU Global Strategy: implementation plan on security and defence

Source: Council of the European Union, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/eu-global-strategy>

The EU's implementation plan (November 2016) laid down the concrete way forward on the future of the CSDP, under the framework established by the Global Strategy. The infographic below displays the level of ambition and the main areas for concrete deliverables to be achieved. The possibility of a permanent structured cooperation was taken into consideration.

Confronting with growing challenges from the Southern and the Eastern neighborhoods, EU and NATO leaders underlined in their Joint Declaration (Warsaw, 8 July, 2016) the urgency to take action on a number of issues of common concern: boost their ability to counter hybrid threats, cooperate on strategic communication and response, develop coordinated procedures and complementary capabilities, broaden and adapt operational collaboration, ensure defence and security resources, empower partners in the S-E via issue-specific projects and enable broader defence research for the two parts.⁹²

⁹² *JOINT DECLARATION*, pp.1-2, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/21481/nato-eu-declaration-8-july-en-final.pdf>, accessed June 22, 2020.



Fig.5.4.2. Infographic - EU-NATO Joint Declaration: implementation

Source: European Council, Council of the European Union, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/12/06/eu-nato-joint-declaration/>

On December 6, 2016, The Council and the NAC validated 40 proposals in the 7 areas, in order to implement the EU-NATO joint declaration.

5.5. PROGRESS TOWARDS A EUROPEAN PERMANENT STRUCTURED COOPERATION

Though formally presented as both strengthening the EU's defense mechanisms and concomitantly reinforcing EU-US efforts deployed so far under the NATO umbrella, the launching of the PESCO initiative and further enhancement of the EU CFSP were aimed at gradually securing the Europeans' strategic autonomy. This also followed the perceived controversial stance the former US President Donald Trump displayed during his campaign and after being elected with regard to NATO (which he denominated "an obsolete organization"), destabilizing trust and inaugurating a new era in transatlantic security relations, while seeming to return to the old American unilateralist paradigm.

In such circumstances, the EU's new (neo-realist) "security dilemma" of balancing power with the US or continuing to work side by side⁹³ was responded to with a prompt reaction and a sense of alienation from

⁹³ see Petros Demetriou, *NATO & CSDP: Can the EU afford to go solo?*, in *Cogent Social Sciences*, Vol. 2, No. 1, July 2016, pp. 1-16.

the US partner, former German Chancellor Angela Merkel said on January 2017 that “We Europeans have our destiny in our own hands”⁹⁴.

On March 2017, the Council adopted a “Concept note on the operational planning and conduct capabilities for CSDP missions and operations”⁹⁵, detailing measures to improve the EU's promptness and effectiveness, enhancing civilian-military cooperation, as part of the Union's comprehensive strategy.

In parallel with the EU's own developing of capabilities, at the Foreign Affairs Council (May 18, 2017), the European leaders together with NATO's Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg made an overall assessment of the common set of 42 proposals in the 7 areas identified in the EU-NATO 2016 Joint Declaration. They framed transatlantic security cooperation as the norm rather than the exception.

On June 22, 2017, the European Council called for the launching of PESCO, which will have been established on December 11 with the voluntary participation of 25 countries and it was officially celebrated at the December 14 European Council meeting. At the launching ceremony, President Donald Tusk remarked that “For many years, the strongest argument against PESCO had been the fear that it would lead to the weakening of NATO. But it is quite the opposite. Strong European defence naturally strengthens NATO. This is why PESCO is not only good news for us, but it is also good news for our allies. And bad news for our enemies”⁹⁶.

The Notification on PESCO explicitly mentioned the complementary dimension of this European security and defence initiative (in the sense that it will not double NATO's military operations, but rather support the current involvement on transatlantic matters) and the pre-eminence of NATO's principles and missions for its Allied member states: “Enhanced defence capabilities of EU Member States will also benefit NATO. They will strengthen the European pillar within the Alliance and respond to repeated demands for stronger transatlantic burden sharing”⁹⁷.

Based on two levels, the Council had the responsibility for the overall policy direction and assessment Mechanism to investigate if Members fulfill their engagements. Only PESCO members could vote, most of the decisions being made unanimously. PESCO's success will be assessed against the projects it will be able to propose under the management of Member States directly contributing to it.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ Birgit Jennen, Rainer Buerger, *Merkel Says Europe Controls Its Own Fate in Rebuff to Trump*, January 16, 2017, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-01-16/merkel-says-europe-controls-its-own-fate-in-rebuff-to-trump>, accessed June 22, 2020.

⁹⁵ *CONCEPT NOTE: OPERATIONAL PLANNING AND CONDUCT CAPABILITIES FOR CSDP MISSIONS AND OPERATIONS*, Brussels, March 3, 2017, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-6818-2017-INIT/en/pdf>, accessed September 20, 2020.

⁹⁶ European Council, *Reinforcing European defence: remarks by President Donald Tusk at the event on PESCO*, 14 December 2017, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/12/14/reinforcing-european-defence-remarks-by-president-donald-tusk-at-the-pesco-event/>, accessed June 22, 2020.

⁹⁷ *NOTIFICATION ON PERMANENT STRUCTURED COOPERATION (PESCO)*, Annex I-Principles of PESCO, 2017, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/31511/171113-pesco-notification.pdf>, accessed June 22, 2020.

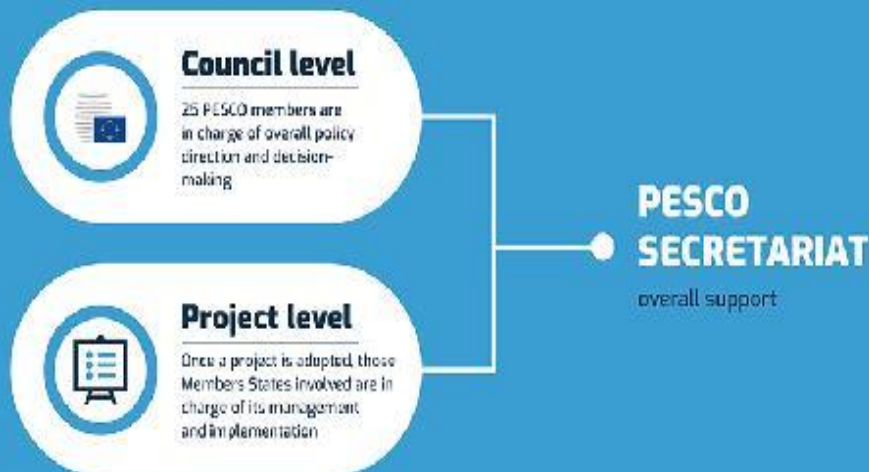
⁹⁸ European External Action Service, *PERMANENT STRUCTURED COOPERATION – PESCO DEEPENING DEFENCE COOPERATION AMONG EU MEMBER STATES*, November 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/pesco_factsheet_november_2019.pdf, accessed June 24, 2020. see also Iulia-Anamaria Ghidui, “The Transatlantic Alliance Today: an integrated or a dispersed response to contemporary global challenges?”, in Valentin Naumescu (ed.), *The New European Union and Its Global Strategy: From Brexit to PESCO*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2020, pp.62-63.



PESCO - WHAT IS IT?

Permanent Structured Cooperation: treaty-based framework and process to deepen defence cooperation among participating Member States to develop capabilities and increase their operational availability.

HOW DOES IT WORK?



PESCO SECRETARIAT - WHAT IS IT AND WHAT DOES IT DO?

- ▶ Run by EEAS (Crisis Management and Planning Directorate and EU Military Staff) and European Defence Agency
- ▶ Supporting identification and implementation of new projects
- ▶ Project assessment and support for new PESCO projects
- ▶ Supporting PESCO participating Member States

17 PROJECTS ADOPTED



AS OF 06/03/2018

Fig.5.5.1. PESCO structure

Source: European External Action Service, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/yemen/35358/security-and-defence-infographics_en

On December 11, 2017, EU Member States presented an initial set of 17 PESCO defence projects to address the EU's capability gaps and to ensure cross-border availability and interoperability of forces (not already covered by the NATO treaties). The projects covered defence training, capability development, and operational readiness, as presented below in the PESCO Factsheet.⁹⁹ The new Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), run by the European Defence Agency, was in charge of detecting new opportunities for collaboration, whereas the European Defence Fund (EDF) will be providing the necessary financial instruments.

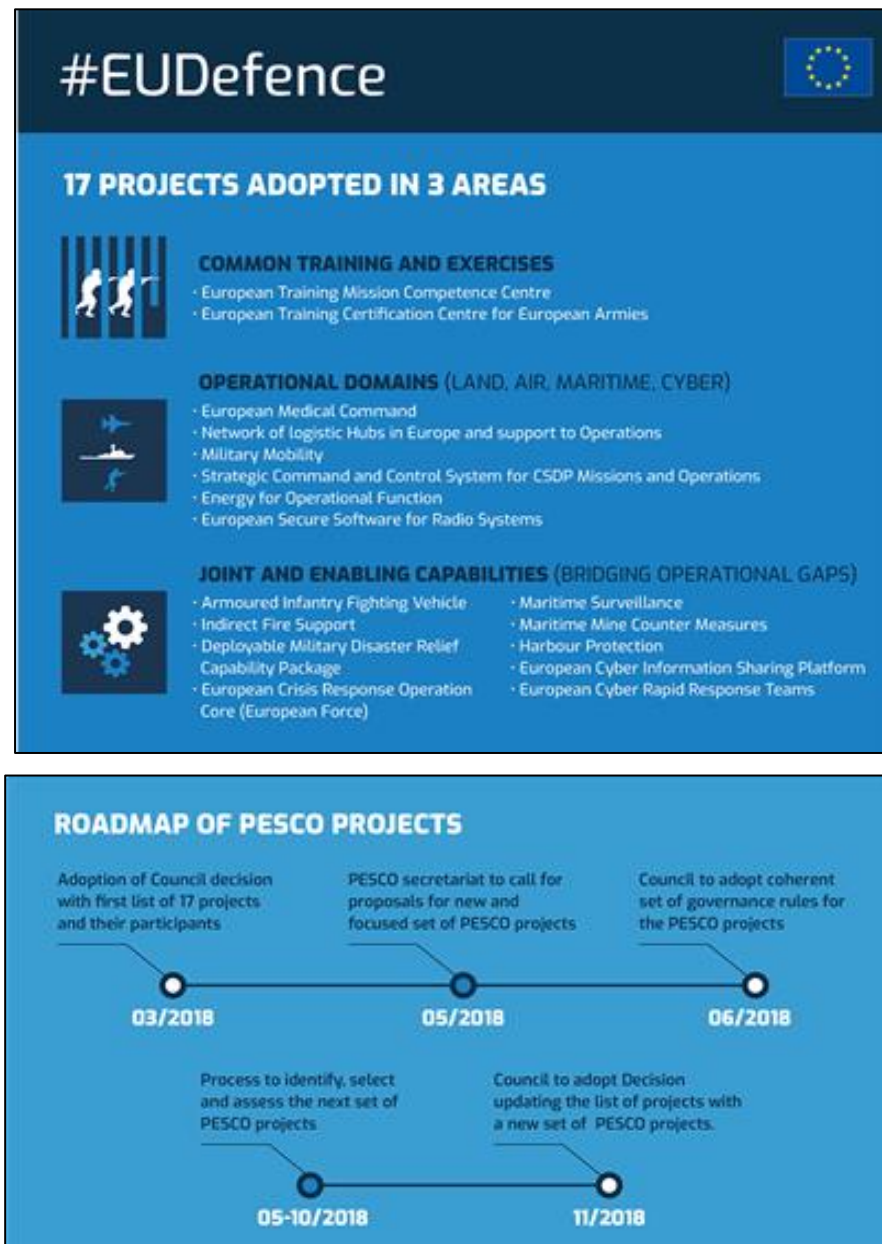


Fig.5.5.2. 17 projects adopted in 3 areas

Source: European Council, Council of the European Union, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/03/06/defence-cooperation-council-adopts-an-implementation-roadmap-for-the-permanent-structured-cooperation-pesco/>

⁹⁹ *Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)-Factsheet, 2018*, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/34226/permanent-structured-cooperation-pesco-factsheet_en, accessed June 22, 2020.

PESCO somehow appeared as a Franco– German brainchild, a strategic move of the two core European Union countries committed to their efforts to re-launch and reform the European project as the British decided to leave the bloc. Even so, we could have witnessed some differences of opinion, some nuances between France and Germany regarding the most suitable approach.

As Germany used to push forward with its inclusive vision of PESCO (somehow opposing France's preference for a core, more flexible grouping of participant states), French President Emmanuel Macron unveiled—on the occasion of his September 2017 Sorbonne speech another defence cooperation initiative, called the European Intervention Initiative (EI2), signed by 9 European states at that time, at a defence summit in Luxembourg. Compared to PESCO, this inevitably appeared as a distinct members' club, including states like Estonia, Great Britain or Denmark, with a tradition in recent years to willingly get involved and commit their armed forces to ongoing operations. The EI2 too has been labeled as complementary to NATO. President Macron expressed the intention to build “a common strategic culture”¹⁰⁰, to “ensure Europe's autonomous operating capabilities, in complement to NATO”¹⁰¹. EI2 officially became operation as of November 7, 2018.

Having no established headquarters or institutional constraints, the EI2 will have based itself rather on the principle of operativity/interoperability (deploying troops where needed, in due course), then on capacity building, similar to PESCO's design. And from Paris these were seen as mutually reinforcing frameworks of action, coming to the help of both the EU and NATO. Some of the EU's military projects developed in the PESCO framework could be integrated into the EI2 in the future¹⁰². NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg has named EI2 “a useful exercise to enhance forces and promptness of reaction”¹⁰³.

Germany, instead, has expressed its reluctance for the time being regarding the EI2 defence initiative, advancing various complaints or criticisms, such as that it may have the potential to undermine other European defence projects made public since 2016, or it will attract political disunity and lack of cohesion, given that only a few states participate and the project positions itself outside the Union.¹⁰⁴

If we are to look at the American perspective on all these recent strategic European defence and security arrangements, despite formally saluting the efforts for a joint contribution to enhance their defence capabilities and make them more efficient and despite the traditional appeal of the US Administration for a stronger and more responsible Europe in terms of security in the last years, indicating the peril of a fragile ally for the Alliance, Washington manifested a particular fear or skepticism towards a possible duplication in NATO's mission and activity.

Additionally, the Americans feared that the selection of modern defence equipment will come from European contractors only. This might be a partially righteous concern. A US diplomatic source signaled that “the two main concerns are that there's no duplication with NATO and that non–EU allies are not cut out of competitions for future weapons. If the EU countries are joining forces to make acquisitions that are ultimately going to be used in the NATO context, there should be fair and open competitions”¹⁰⁵.

¹⁰⁰ The Economist, *Emmanuel Macron Leads a New Effort on European Defence*, 2018, <https://www.economist.com/europe/2018/06/28/emmanuel-macron-leads-a-new-effort-on-european-defence>, accessed June 22, 2020

¹⁰¹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰² Alexandra Brzozowski, *Macron's coalition of European militaries grows in force*, September 24, 2019, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/defence-and-security/news/macrons-coalition-of-european-militaries-grows-in-force/>, accessed June 22, 2020.

¹⁰³ Enrico Martial, “Tutti gli obiettivi dei Nove con la difesa comune europea, 2018, *Startmag*, <https://www.startmag.it/mondo/difesa-comune-europea-nove-obiettivi/>, accessed June 22, 2020.

¹⁰⁴ Christian Mölling, Claudia Major, *Why Joining France's European Intervention Initiative Is the Right Decision for Germany*, Egmont Institute, 2018, <http://www.egmontinstitute.be/why-joining-frances-european-intervention-initiative-is-the-right-decision-for-germany/>, accessed June 22, 2020.

¹⁰⁵ Euractiv, *US Offer First Reaction to EU Defence PESCO Pact*, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/news/us-offer-first-reaction-to-eu-defence-pesco-pact/>, accessed June 22, 2020.

Federiga Bindi argued that massive European financial support and European wide procurement procedures to benefit the European military industry will definitely challenge the US potential in this field.¹⁰⁶

The American permanent representative to NATO, Kay Bailey Hutchison, pointed out that PESCO or a new European Defence Fund are not going to be applauded if they go on to “to be a protectionist vehicle for EU”¹⁰⁷. She continued: “We’re going to watch carefully, because if that becomes the case, then it could splinter the strong security alliance that we have”¹⁰⁸. NATO’s Secretary-General, Jens Stoltenberg, also mentioned the need to avoid duplicating efforts between NATO and the EU and that Europeans must stay firm in their commitment not to offer an alternative through PESCO.

There were, however, officials and experts in the United States arguing that PESCO as a European project does not pose any threat to the US’ ambitions or NATO purposes and it might only help strengthen the European defence pillar within the Alliance. It will not develop so much as to pose a threat in terms of competitiveness. This was the opinion of Jim Townsend, former deputy assistant secretary of defence for European and NATO policy, a member of the think tank Centre for a New American Security, who commented, based on his previous experience with coordinated projects, that these usually cost too much and are delivered too late¹⁰⁹.

On June 25, 2018, the Council adopted a common governance regulation to apply for all the projects developed within the PESCO framework. With this occasion, the European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP) agreed by the representatives of the co-legislators (n.n. the EP and the Council of the EU) on May 22, 2018 was notably welcomed in the Council. Paving the route for the European Defence Fund to be established for the funding period 2021-2027, the EDIDP it was aimed at promoting “a strong and innovative defence industry”¹¹⁰, boosting “the EU’s autonomy and technological leadership” in the field of defence.¹¹¹

At the NATO 2018 summit (11-12 July), a new EU-NATO Joint Declaration was signed on July 10, 2018, laying out the counterparts’ shared vision of acting together against common security threats of the XXIst century and pledging to review progress on an annual basis. Prior to this, the EU leaders reunited in the European Council in June have explicitly endorsed the need for the renewal of transatlantic security ties through a new official commitment.

Revising aspiring to achieve further steps on the implementation of the objectives set out two years ago, the Declaration reiterated the two sides’ conformity with the decision-making process of their respective in(ter)dependent organizations, not to affect the specific security and defence policy of their members. On a balanced approach, involvement of non-EU members but still partners under the NATO umbrella and, respectively, that of the EU countries outside the Alliance in each other’s particular initiatives were encouraged by the signatories of the document.¹¹²

The contribution that PESCO and the EDF were striving to bring in enhancing European security and defence, contributing to regional and wider peace and stability was formally welcomed by the Joint Declaration. More progress should be achieved particularly when it comes to: “military mobility, counter-

¹⁰⁶ Federiga Bindi, “The Unbearable Weight of History and the End of Transatlantic Relations?”, in Federiga Bindi, *Europe and America-The End of the Transatlantic Relationship* (ed.), Brookings Institution Press, Washington, D.C., 2019, p.297.

¹⁰⁷ Aaron Mehta, *US Warns against ‘Protectionism’ with New EU Defence Agreement*, 2018, <https://www.defencenews.com/smr/munich-security-forum/2018/02/14/us-warns-against-protectionism-with-new-eu-defence-agreement/>, accessed June 22, 2020.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹¹⁰ Euro Access, *Macro Region, Programme: European Defence Industrial Development Programme*, https://www.euro-access.eu/programm/european_defense_industrial_development_programme, accessed June 24, 2020.

¹¹¹ *Ibidem*.

¹¹² *JOINT DECLARATION ON EU-NATO COOPERATION*, Brussels, 10 July 2018, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/36096/nato_eu_final_eng.pdf, accessed June 24, 2020.

terrorism, managing chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear related risks and also the women peace and security agenda”¹¹³.

A second set of 17 projects in the PESCO framework and a third set designing other 13 projects were adopted by the Council on November 2018 and 2019, respectively, the total number (covering the three areas described in Fig.5.5.2.) reaching 47.¹¹⁴

5.6. THE WAR IN UKRAINE – TESTING EUROPEAN STRATEGIC AUTONOMY?

The Russian invasion of Ukraine accounted for another challenge to the transatlantic relation. The involvement of the Western allies to support the Ukrainian people with military equipment and humanitarian aid speaks for the unity in vision the EU and the US do share. Nevertheless, International Relations experts like Jeremy Saphiro and Jana Puglierin warned about the vassalisation of Europe and the need for Europeans to rethink the transatlantic partnership from a more balanced perspective, as “ultimately, American engagement in Europe will only persist if the US believe it has something to gain from its partners.”¹¹⁵ Their analysis developed from the example of Germany fearing to make the first step, that is to send Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine unless the US also contribute with its M1 Abrams tanks.¹¹⁶

In the current global context, the concept of European strategic autonomy was stressed again by President Emmanuel Macron, especially with regards to the US-China dispute over the Taiwan issue. With the occasion of an official trip to China in April 2023, in an interview for Politico the French leader warned about the risk for Europe to enter “crisis that are not ours.”¹¹⁷

To summarize, the development of EU-US security and defense interconnections, in a post-Cold War Europe, still relies on the American military might to a significant extent, while also beginning to shape a more and more ambitious defense policy, in the quest for its long-term “strategic autonomy”. This was partially stimulated by the US’ fluctuant political incentives or their perceived preference for unilateralism in International Relations.

Undoubtedly, the evolution of the EU/PESCO-US/NATO defense and security relation remains a challenge for the medium future, as the capacity for both to operate in a complementary manner is quite difficult to measure and warrant (even if politically praised), while also developing EU’ credibility and military assets to act unilaterally when possible accounts for an enduring process.

¹¹³ *Ibidem*.

¹¹⁴ EEAS, *PERMANENT STRUCTURED COOPERATION – PESCO DEEPENING DEFENCE COOPERATION AMONG EU MEMBER STATES*, *loc.cit*.

¹¹⁵ Jeremy Saphiro, Jana Puglierin, *The art of vassalisation: How Russia’s war on Ukraine has transformed transatlantic relations*, April 4, 2023, <https://ecfr.eu/publication/the-art-of-vassalisation-how-russias-war-on-ukraine-has-transformed-transatlantic-relations/#how-europeans-can-rebalance-the-transatlantic-relationship>, accessed May 5, 2023.

¹¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

¹¹⁷ Jamil Anderlini, Clea Caulcutt, *Europe must resist pressure to become ‘America’s followers,’ says Macron*, <https://www.politico.eu/article/emmanuel-macron-china-america-pressure-interview/>, April 9, 2023, accessed May 5, 2023.

CHAPTER 6.

TRANSATLANTIC CULTURAL RELATIONS AND HIGHER EDUCATION EXCHANGE PROGRAMMES. THE POWER OF CULTURAL DIPLOMACY¹

The present chapter will address a “soft power” topic that is the evolution of the EU-US cultural and educational relations over the last three decades, the cultural diplomacy’s potential to persuade and contribute to the strengthening of bilateral ties, supporting the other mechanisms of cooperation found on the economic, energetic, political or defense agenda.

According to an EP briefing (2017), Europe and North America are the major trade players on the cultural goods market. They jointly accounted for 49% of exports and 62% of imports. Despite this and regardless of the set of share values at the bedrock of the transatlantic relation (democracy, the rule of law, fundamental liberties and free market rules), contrasting policy approaches towards the cultural realm mark a visible difference between the two blocks.

The European social model is well known as lying at the very foundation of the EU’s values heritage. An established tradition of supporting cultural and creative industries in the EU can be traced. Average public expenditure on social and cultural programmes amounted to around 47% of GDP in 2016. This trend is usually explained by the existence of a general conception about the freedom of speech not bearing enough substance or power without meaningful mechanisms to be practiced.

As defined by the EU’s statistical office, Eurostat, cultural goods represent “products of artistic creativity that convey artistic, symbolic and aesthetic values”². They form a group of heterogeneous items not used in the same manner as the majority of household products.

By contrast, in the US, government expenditure on culture is reduced, while the market forces and deregulation are considered the main drivers (according to a laissez-faire perspective), as culture is generally deemed to be a commodity.

There is no federal policy to manage cultural action in the US. Instead, at government level, international cultural exchanges are the role of the Under Secretary of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs within the US Department of State. He conducts the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs operating various exchange programmes. Part of the duties normally undertaken by a ministry of Culture is carried out by the National Endowment for Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for Humanities (NEH), as part of the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities.

Under the 2005 UNESCO Convention, the EU is legally bound to protect and promote its cultural diversity, one of its most important assets, undoubtedly, in order to preserve the visionary “unity in diversity”. This principle is also enshrined in the Article 167 of the TFEU. However, it is a challenging enterprise for the

¹ This chapter has been previously published, in a slightly revised form, and in the Romanian translation respectively as two separated articles, one entitled “Soft Power Perspectives: Assessing Romanian Youth’s Support for a New Transatlantic Erasmus”, in Valentin Naumescu, Raluca Moldovan, Anda Ghilescu (eds.), *The New Transatlantic Relations and the Perspectives of the Global Order. Proceedings of the first edition of the International Conference EUXGLOB*, Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2021 and the other concerned with the transatlantic cultural relation, entitled „Relațiile culturale transatlantice. Puterea diplomației culturale”, in Melania-Gabriela Ciot (coord.), *Politică externă și interculturalitate*, Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2022.

² Arts Council England, *The arts and culture contents sector and exit from the European Union*, https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Arts_culture_Sector_exit_from_EU_NOV_16.pdf, accessed September 20, 2020.

EU to frame and distribute a common European image outside its borders, as the Union's attributions in the cultural field are limited to "supporting, coordinating or supplementing the policies of its Member States"³.

A 2020 EUNIC study entitled "For the future: Make cultural relations count in a post-crisis global society", underlined that culture is a prominent tool in foreign policy as in 2019 the EU countries have dedicated 2.9 billion Euros to cultural relations.⁴

On matters of culture or involving the audiovisual environment, the EU member states can veto against any international agreement that is assessed as threatening cultural and linguistic diversity, according to provisions enshrined in Article 207 (4) (a) TFEU. A matter of dissent in this sense occurred during the TTIP negotiations, as we will further develop in this chapter.

Culture and the audiovisual sectors are financed through the EU framework programme called "Creative Europe". Between 2014 and 2020, 1.46 billion Euros have been allocated in this regard.

The table below shows the difference in EU national budgets designed for the cultural sector compared to the US federal endowment for culture and arts.⁵ The US has allocated €265 million in 2016, far less than in the EU countries in the previous years. France (2016) and Germany (2009) championed with a total budget of € 9000 million.

Table 6.1. Spending on culture in selected EU countries

EU country	Total budget, € million	Per capita, €	Year
Denmark	2 200	400	2009
Sweden	2 600	277	2011
Austria	2 000	238	2011
Finland	945	178	2009
Spain	7 000	149	2009
France	9 000	138	2016
Italy	7 000	119	2008
Germany	9 000	110	2009
Czech Republic	1 100	105	2010
Poland	1 960	52	2011
United States	265 *	0.82	2016

Source: [Council of Europe](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:12012E/TXT&from=EN), Cultural policies and trends in Europe, 2011, own calculation.

Notes: *Cumulative endowments of [NEA](#) and [NEH](#) for 2016. Amount converted on 20 June 2017, 1 US\$ = €0.896644

Source: Council of Europe, https://epthinktank.eu/2017/07/15/culture-in-eu-us-relations/spending_on_culture/

As we speak, jobs in EU cultural realm reached 8.7 million that propelled it ahead of the automotive sector. According to the 2018 EU Agenda for Culture, "there is a EUR 8.7 billion trade surplus in cultural goods, and cultural and creative sectors are estimated to contribute 4.2% to EU gross domestic product".⁶

In what concerns the cultural diplomacy instruments, the EEAS is a key institutional factor in bridging the gap between reality and perceptions and/or misconception about the EU. It acts through the 139 EU

³ CONSOLIDATED VERSION OF TFEU, Articles 2(5) and 6(c), <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:12012E/TXT&from=EN>, accessed September 15, 2020.

⁴ EUNIC, *Make cultural relations count*, <https://www.eunicglobal.eu/news/eunic-statement>, accessed July 12, 2020.

⁵ Ivana Katsarova, *loc. cit.*

⁶ European Commission, *A New European Agenda for Culture*, August 22, 2018, https://ec.europa.eu/culture/sites/culture/files/commission_communication_a_new_european_agenda_for_culture_2018.pdf, accessed July 11, 2020, p. 4.

Delegations (embassies) all over the world, to convey the unbiased message and attract foreign audiences towards the European cultural model.

The Delegation of the EU to the US promotes the bilateral relationship among the American public. The Press and Public Diplomacy Section manages various education projects supporting the EU's policy agenda, conferences, cultural festivals, study tours, and media events.⁷

Also, the EU's national institutes for culture (abbreviated EUNICs) bring together organizations in all EU member countries in a global network of clusters and play the role of real ambassadors advocating for intercultural dialogue and for a greater importance placed on culture in public policies as well as at the level of external relations. Currently, four EUNIC clusters can be found on the US territory: in New York, Washington DC, Chicago and Silicon Valley San Francisco Bay Area.⁸

In May 2020, the EU HR Josep Borrell and EU Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, Mariya Gabriel, highlighted that "even more so now that the Covid-19 pandemic has inflicted a harsh blow to the cultural sector, EU initiatives as the European Capitals of Culture, Erasmus+ and Creative Europe acquire a renewed importance for the sustainability of the cultural industry"⁹.

The EU VP took the opportunity to underline that "three-quarters of the world's major conflicts have a cultural dimension. Bridging the gap between cultures is urgent and necessary for peace, stability and development"¹⁰.

6.1. PREMISES OF TRANSATLANTIC CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL COOPERATION AFTER 1990

The Transatlantic Declaration (1990) underlined in its chapter dedicated to "Education, Scientific and Cultural Cooperation" that the EU-US partnership will focus on continuous efforts to strengthen, among other aspects of interest, mutual cooperation in the areas directly impacting upon the citizens' well-being. Exchanges and joint cultural and educational projects were included on the list.¹¹

According to the NTA (1995), cultural networks were proposed to be strengthened by exchanges in the fields of arts, theatre, music, TV co-productions etc. An EU-US prize for literature may have been launched if private sector sponsorship would have been available to this end. The EU and the US agreed to establish Internet sites for quick and easy access to details of the transatlantic initiative and to collaborate on developing a communications strategy to attract public awareness across the Atlantic of the rich and varied content of a relationship crucial for the global peace, stability and prosperity.¹² These issues were also addressed with the occasion of the 1995 EU-US Summit.¹³

In line with the NTA, the EC has launched in 1998 a network of EU Centers in American Universities, to provide knowledge about the EU and to raise awareness in the USA about the political, economic and cultural importance of the transatlantic relation, to promote EU policies, and to publicize EU's transatlantic perspective within regional communities.

⁷ Delegation of the European Union to the United States, *About*, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/united-states-america/27290/about_en, accessed July 11, 2020.

⁸ EUNIC, *Network worldwide*, <https://www.eunicglobal.eu/map>, accessed July 10, 2020.

⁹ EEAS, *The EU, a product itself of a mosaic of diversity shaped throughout centuries, is deeply engaged in the preservation of the diversity of cultural expressions and traditions*, May 21, 2020, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/79514/world-day-cultural-diversity-dialogue-and-development-fostering-dialogue-and-respect-between_en, accessed July 13, 2020.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹¹ *Transatlantic Declaration on EC-US Relations*, 1990, *loc. cit*.

¹² *THE NEW TRANSATLANTIC AGENDA*, *loc. cit*.

¹³ *EU-US SUMMIT*, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/PRES_95_356, accessed July 12, 2020.

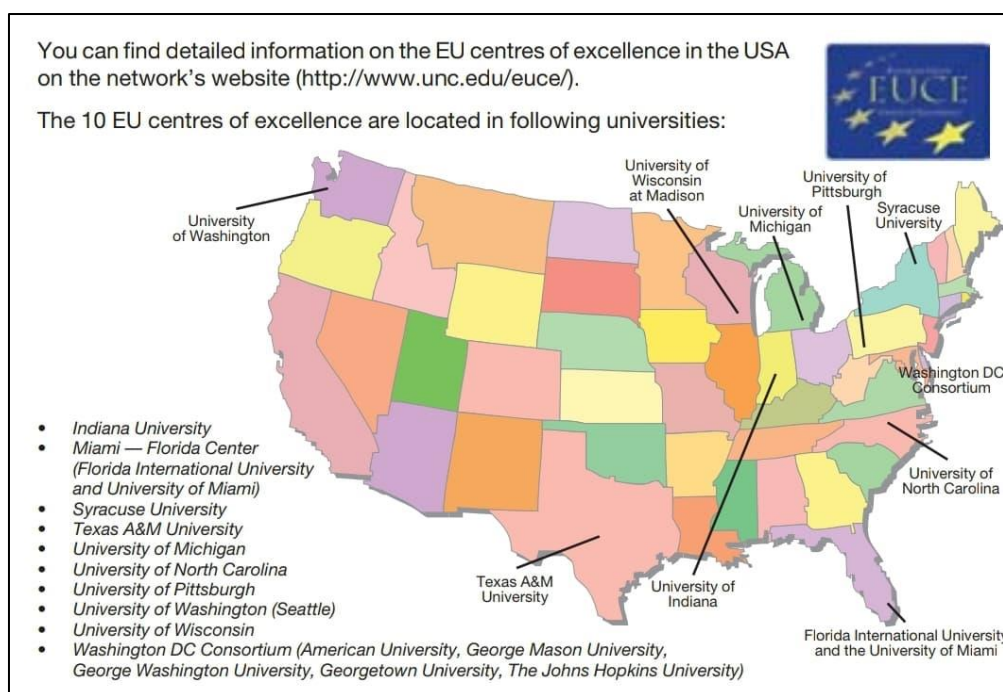


Fig.6.1.1. A network of EU centers in the USA

Source: European External Action Service, http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/us/docs/infopack_06_en.pdf

Currently, there are ten EU Centers of Excellence in the US and more than 3.3. million Euros were allocated to support them financially between 2008 and 2011.

The EU–US Higher Education and Training Agreement (1995, together with the NTA) was renewed in 2006 for another 8 years by Council Decision 2006/910/EC (the Atlantis Programme). This was aimed at promoting “understanding between the peoples of the European Union and the United States of America and [to improve] the quality of their human resource development, by supporting Transatlantic Degree actions, Excellence Mobility Projects, Policy-oriented measures, and Schuman-Fulbright scholarships”¹⁴.

The Fulbright-Schuman Program is administered by the Fulbright Commission in Brussels and co-financed by the U.S. State Department and the DG for Education and Culture of the European Commission. It offers grants for EU researchers in the US as well as to American citizens conducting research in the EU.¹⁵

Fulbright opportunities for Romanian citizens are displayed in the figure below. Grants have been designed for various categories of beneficiaries, such as Master’s degree students, doctoral and post-doctoral researchers, visiting scholars to teach at US colleges and universities and a non-degree professional development program at US academic institutions.

¹⁴ *Information Guide-EU-US Relations A guide to the European Union’s relations with the United States of America*, <http://aei.pitt.edu/75414/2/EU-US-Relations.pdf>, accessed July 12, 2020.

¹⁵ *ABOUT THE PROGRAM*, <http://www.fulbrightschuman.eu/about-the-program/>, accessed July 12, 2020.

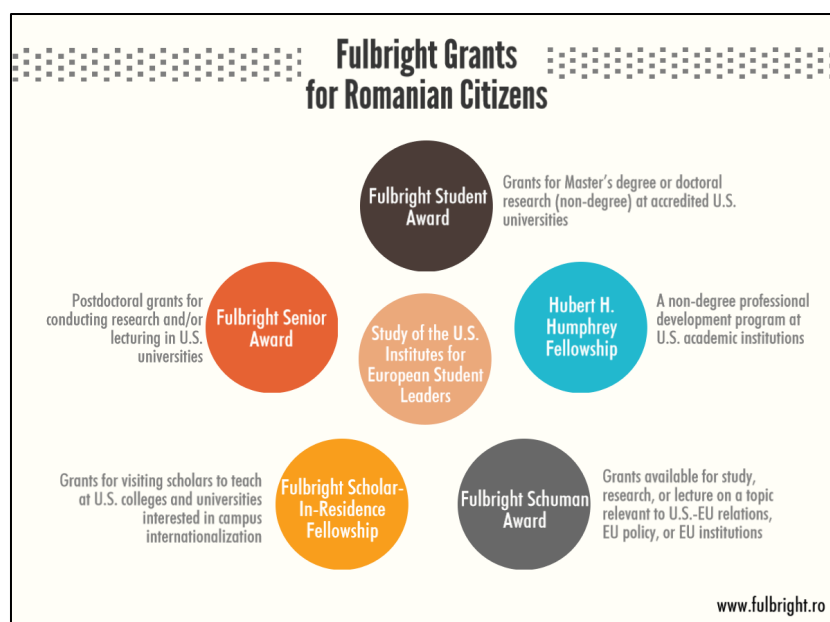


Fig.6.1.2. Fulbright Grants for Romanian Citizens

Source: World Scholarship Forum, <https://images.app.goo.gl/WrwVHBrKf2asTLCX9>

Another initiative, called Erasmus Mundus, was launched in 2004, to provide EU-funded scholarships for extra-EU citizens enrolled in master's courses and for EU students at partner universities outside the Union. In 2014, Erasmus + was established, to encompass under its umbrella all the EU programmes for education, training, youth and sport.

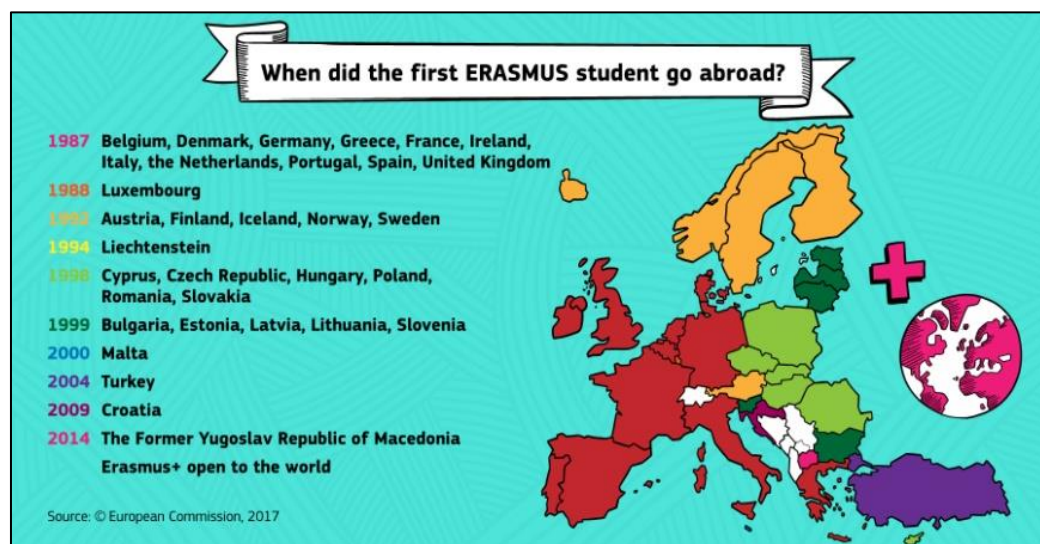


Fig.6.1.3. When did the first Erasmus student go abroad?

Source: European Commission, https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/anniversary/spotlight-erasmus-worldwide_en

Figures show that in 2019 a number of 64 Erasmus Mundus scholarships were granted for the US. It was a better score than for some of the EU countries (Germany, Italy, and Spain) or countries in the Eastern neighborhood, but a lower one compared to Asian or Latin American destinations.

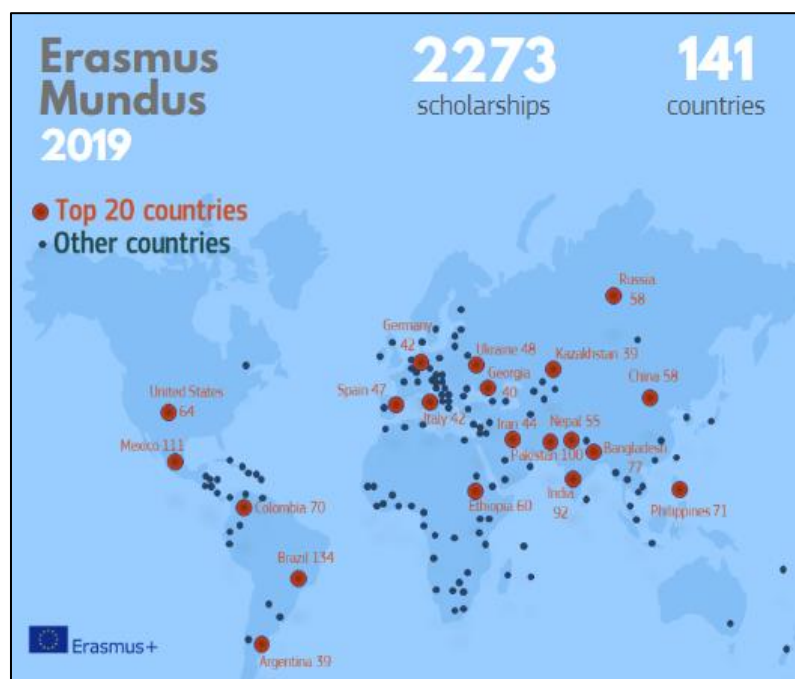


Fig. 6.1.4. Erasmus Mundus scholarships 2019, by destination country

Source: European Commission, <https://twitter.com/EUErasmusPlus/status/1134002755142447106/photo/1>

As the 2020 winners' graphic present, the number of Erasmus Mundus scholarships for US candidates reached 61 in 2020. (In 2021, out of the 2756 scholarships, 76 were for US candidates¹⁶). Countries with a higher score were Spain, Egypt, Pakistan, India, Philippines, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Russia.

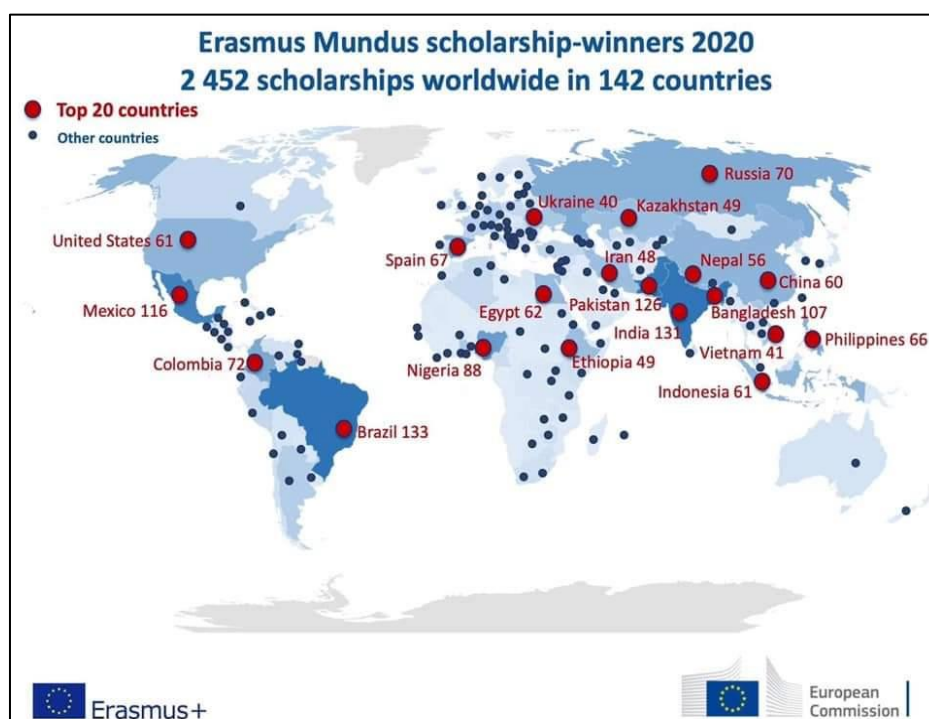


Fig. 6.1.5. Erasmus Mundus scholarship-winners 2020 by destination country

Source: European Commission, <https://n2k3y9s6.stackpathcdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/IMG-20200710-WA0121.jpg>

¹⁶ European Commission, *Erasmus Mundus scholarship-winners, 2021*

6.2. TRANSATLANTIC CULTURAL DIPLOMACY, CREATIVE INDUSTRIES AND “CULTURAL EXCEPTIONS”

The European-American Cultural Foundation was created in 2013 as a non-profit corporation to strengthen the EU's and its MS' cultural bonds with the US, on the basis of a “profound historical relationship and affinity”.

The Foundation works towards increasing awareness of European linguistic and cultural diversity among the American public, delivering high-quality dialogue and programming, developing long-term cultural partnerships, exposing the dynamic US youth to the cultures and peoples of EU countries through intercultural dialogue and exchange.

Also the Foundation aims to raise funds and provide assistance for the development of European events and programs in the arts, culture, languages, education, and science presented collectively by the Cultural Departments of the European Union states and to strengthen transatlantic business and cultural relationships.¹⁷

A number of cultural programs are organized by the European-American Cultural Foundation in conjunction with the Delegation of EU and the Member States. We mention here Kids Euro Festival, EU Open House Day, EuroNight and European Month of Culture.

2019 has marked the 7th year when cultural experiences under the framework of the “European Month of Culture” highlighted the EU's cultural diversity to the audience in Washington, DC. Over 60 contemporary musical performances, art exhibitions and tours, film screenings, and lectures took place at various cultural venues.¹⁸

The EU Month of Culture includes the yearly flagship EU Open House event, when all the EU states' embassies and the EU Delegation to the USA open their doors to the wider public, offering a good opportunity to get familiar with the national cultural traditions and the unity in diversity. It is one of the most popular annual events in Washington welcoming around 100 000 visitors per day.

The implications of COVID-19 have postponed in-person activities scheduled for May 2020 under the EU Open House initiative, but two campaigns - „Stronger Together” and “HomeWithEU” – were created by the EU Delegation and the EU Member States to mark the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Schuman Declaration.

HomeWithEU has featured one cultural activity native to each EU country that can be enjoyed by everyone while social distancing. STRONGER TOGETHER: Aiding The Recovery was a special broadcast hosted by EUintheUS, bringing many familiar faces together on Europe Day to address the coronavirus and the necessity of the EU and the US to work together in combating this global crisis. EU Ambassador to the US Stavros Lambrinidis, DC Mayor Muriel Bowser, Comedian Eddie Izzard, Travel Guru Rick Steves, Chef Jose Andres, Pete Buttigieg were among the public figures.¹⁹

Kids Euro Festival (launched in 2007) is one of the main arts festivals for American children, gathering talented European entertainers to the DC metropolitan area each autumn season. It rejoiced the participation of more than 10 thousand people each year.

The festival aims at increasing awareness of the truly diverse European cultures among the American young generation and at forging new collaborations within the educational community of Washington, D.C.²⁰

¹⁷ The European-American Cultural Foundation, *Our Mission*, loc.cit.

¹⁸ European Union Delegation to the US, *European Month of Culture*, http://events.euintheus.org/landing_page/eumoc/, accessed July 12, 2020.

¹⁹ European Union Delegation to the USA, *EU Open House Online = Stronger Together & HomeWithEU*, https://events.euintheus.org/landing_page/euopenhouse/, accessed July 12, 2020.

²⁰ European Union Delegation to the USA, *Kids Euro Festival 2019*, <http://events.euintheus.org/kids-eu-festival/>, accessed July 12, 2020.

Events usually take place in libraries, schools, hospitals, cultural institutes and cultural venues in Washington, DC and neighboring counties. The Kids Euro Festival initiative has been facilitated through a series of local partnership and support and sponsorship from foundations, individuals and businesses.²¹

The American Film Institute EU Film Showcase enjoys a tradition of 33 years already, bringing the best of European cinema to the US audience. Selections include international film festival awardees, European box-office hits, debut works by promising talents and Oscar submissions for best foreign language film.²²

Getting to Know Europe is an EU Programme offering competitive grants to US-based NGOs and non-profit bodies developing a wide range of activities including cultural initiatives, thus promoting a better knowledge and understanding, within local and regional communities in the US, of the EU, its international role, policies, culture and the value of the transatlantic partnership.²³

Inspired by this EU initiative, the 2013 project entitled Transit: Creative Placemaking with Europe in Baltimore (Administered by EUNIC) is an illustrative example of how European and Baltimore artists, city planners and transportation officials have been brought together to strategically re-model transit areas within three urban Arts & Entertainment Districts. The picture below presents such an example.



Fig. 6.2.1. BUS sculpture and bus stop waiting area designed by a Spanish artist collaborative

Source: Artplace America, <https://www.artplaceamerica.org/funded-projects/transit>

Cultural and creative industries (CCIs) are an income source for nearly 30 million people around the globe, generating total revenues of US\$2.250 billion. Generally speaking, CCIs were quite resilient to the global economic crisis, research concluded. Both the EU and the US account for major players at global level in this type of industries.

²¹ Ivana Katsarova, *loc. cit.*

²² *Ibidem.*

²³ Atlantic Council, *Getting to Know Europe*, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/uncategorized/about-getting-to-know-europe/>, accessed July 13, 2020.

In 2015, Ernst and Young presented “The first global map of cultural and creative industries”. According to it, the Asia-Pacific leads the CCI market and Europe and North America follow suit.²⁴ Europe accounted for over €630 billion of revenues (almost a third at global level) and 7.7 million jobs (26% of total jobs in the CCI sector).

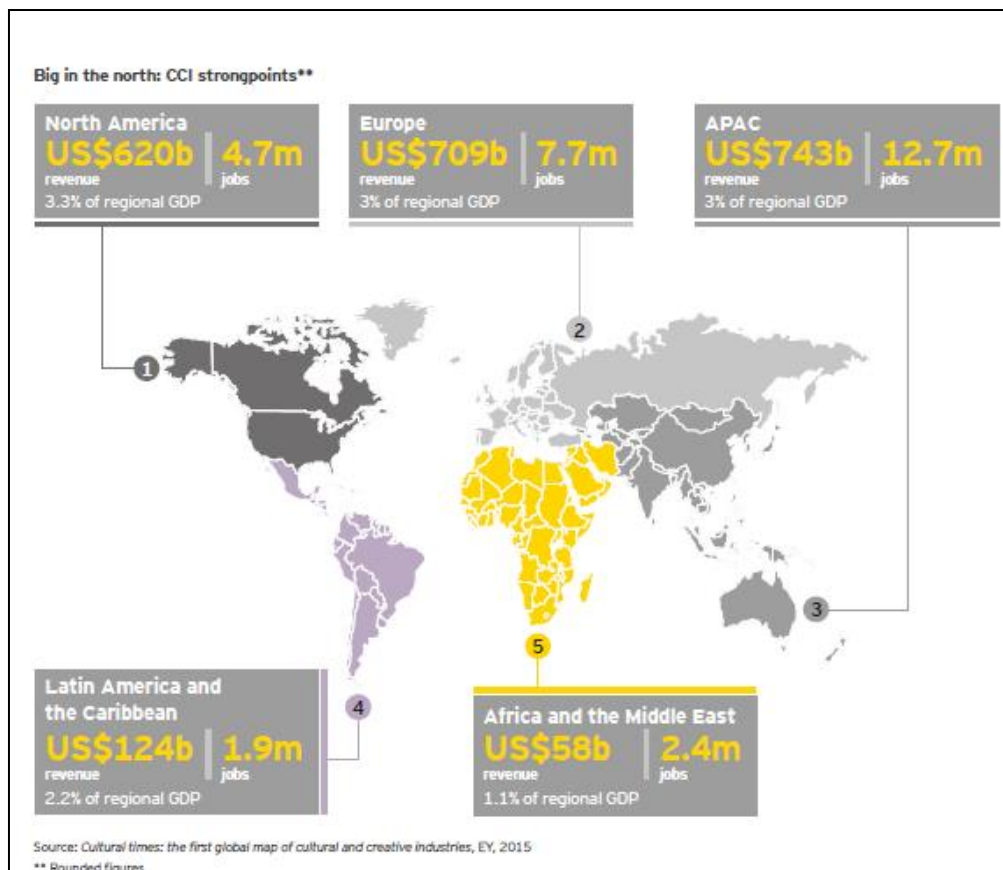


Fig. 6.2.2. CCI by region: a complex and colorful canvas-Big in the north: CCI strong points

Source: EY analysis of cultural and creative markets, 2015,

https://en.unesco.org/creativity/sites/creativity/files/cultural_times._the_first_global_map_of_cultural_and_creative_industries.pdf#page=8,%20accessed%20July%2014,%202020.

Europe’s cultural economy can be traced back in history, as the region has a unique heritage and arts institutions. The old continent is also a stable trendsetter on the global scene, as the UK, for example, is leading the art market, particularly remarked in contemporary art, while the French company Publicis is a major actor in the world advertising sector. Seven out of ten most popular museums worldwide are located in Europe and 30 of the 69 UNESCO “Creative Cities” are European, which is a notable aspect we believe. The European cultural ecosystem designed by giant CCI players, like WPP Group, Pearson, Axel Springer, etc.

North America, as the third-largest CCI market and 4.7 million jobs (16% of the total), is home to the largest market for TV, movies and radio broadcasting. The US also holds a leading position in terms of digital transformation, bearing the largest audience consuming digital cultural content.²⁵

²⁴ EY, *Cultural times -The first global map of cultural and creative industries*, December 2015, p. 8, https://en.unesco.org/creativity/sites/creativity/files/cultural_times._the_first_global_map_of_cultural_and_creative_industries.pdf#page=8, accessed July 14, 2020.

²⁵ EY, *Cultural times -The first global map of cultural and creative industries*, loc. cit., p.16.

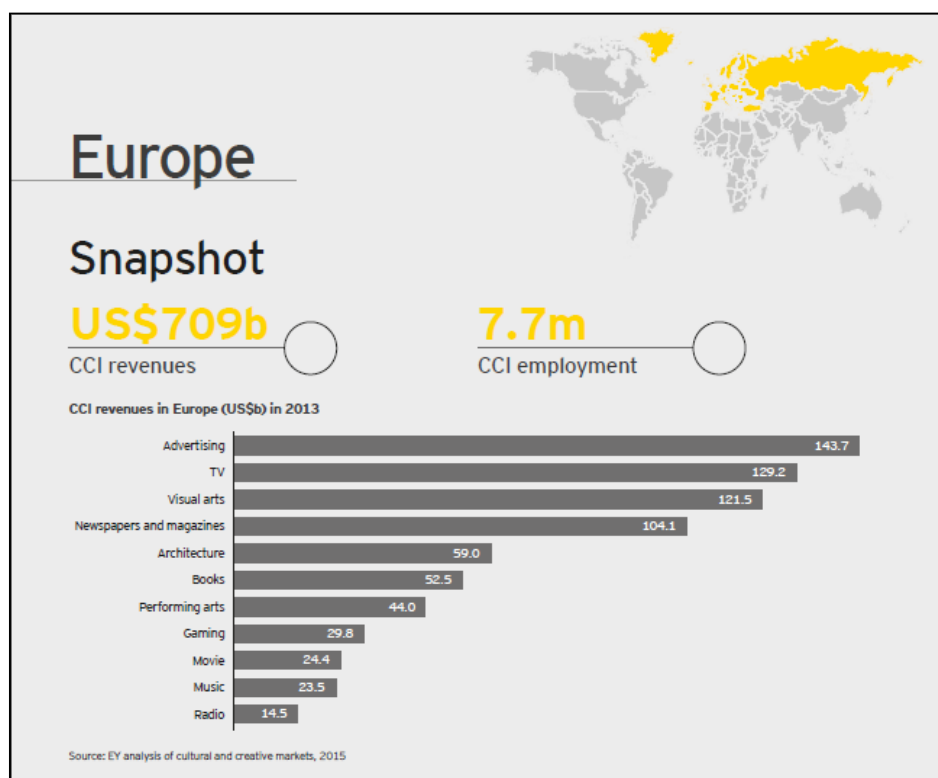


Fig. 6.2.3. Europe-Snapshot, CCI revenues in Europe

Source: EY analysis of cultural and creative markets, 2015,

https://en.unesco.org/creativity/sites/creativity/files/cultural_times_the_first_global_map_of_cultural_and_creative_industries.pdf#page=8,%20accessed%20July%2014,%202020.

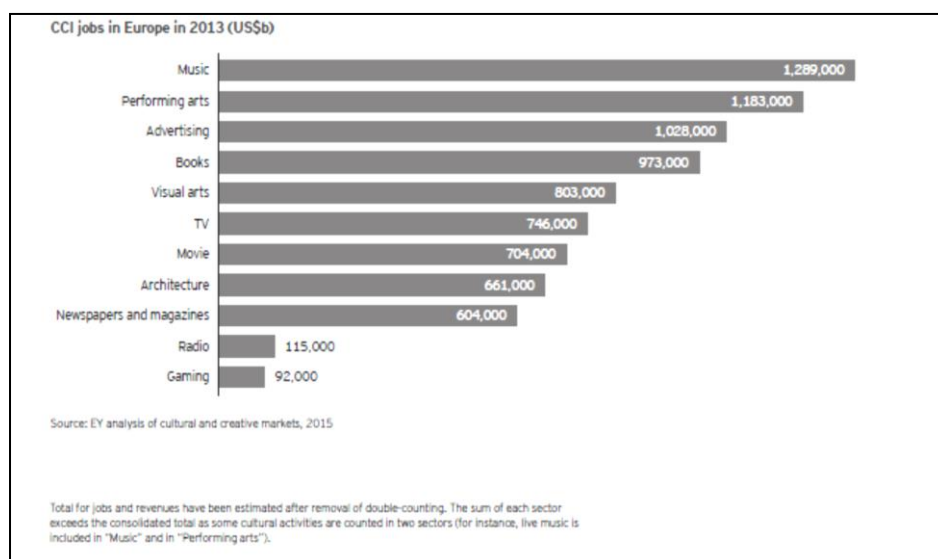


Fig. 6.2.4. Europe-Snapshot, CCI jobs in Europe, 2013

Source: EY analysis of cultural and creative markets, 2015,

https://en.unesco.org/creativity/sites/creativity/files/cultural_times_the_first_global_map_of_cultural_and_creative_industries.pdf#page=8,%20accessed%20July%2014,%202020.

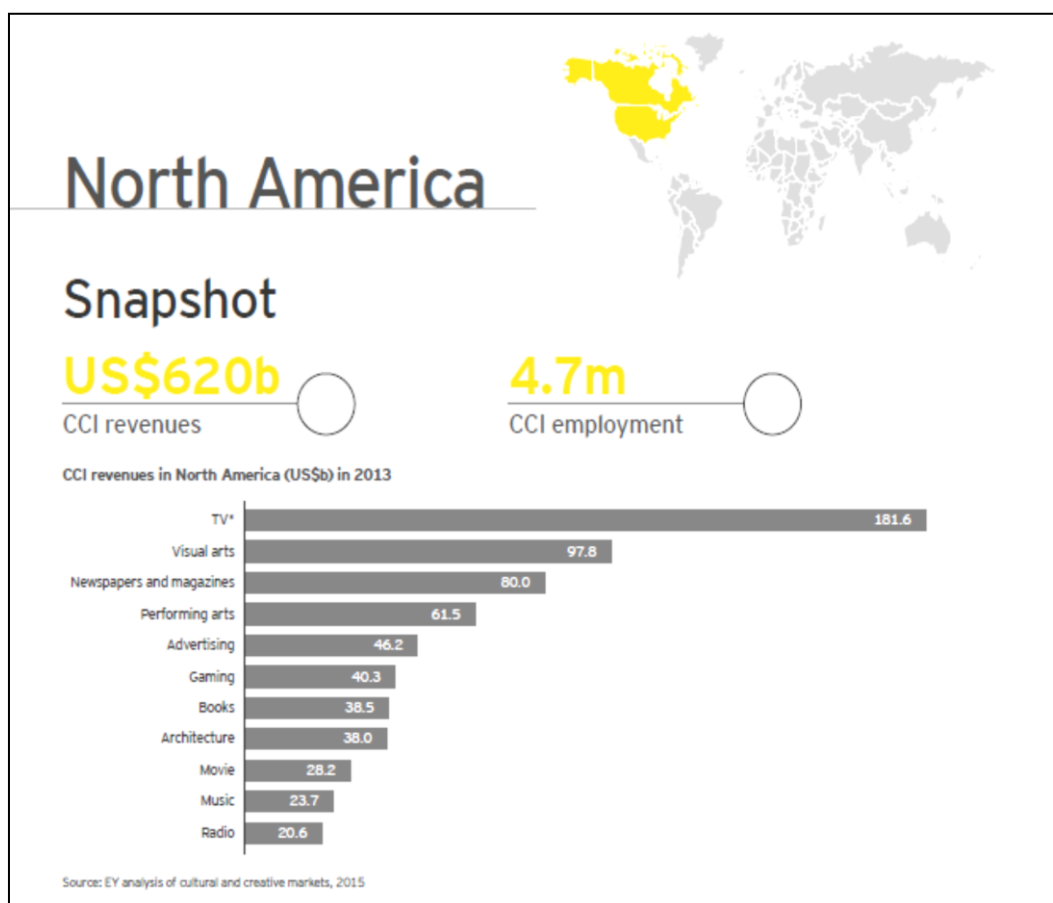


Fig.6.2.5. North America-Snapshot. CCI revenues in North America

Source: EY analysis of cultural and creative markets, 2015,

https://en.unesco.org/creativity/sites/creativity/files/cultural_times._the_first_global_map_of_cultural_and_creative_industries.pdf#page=8,%20accessed%20July%2014,%202020.

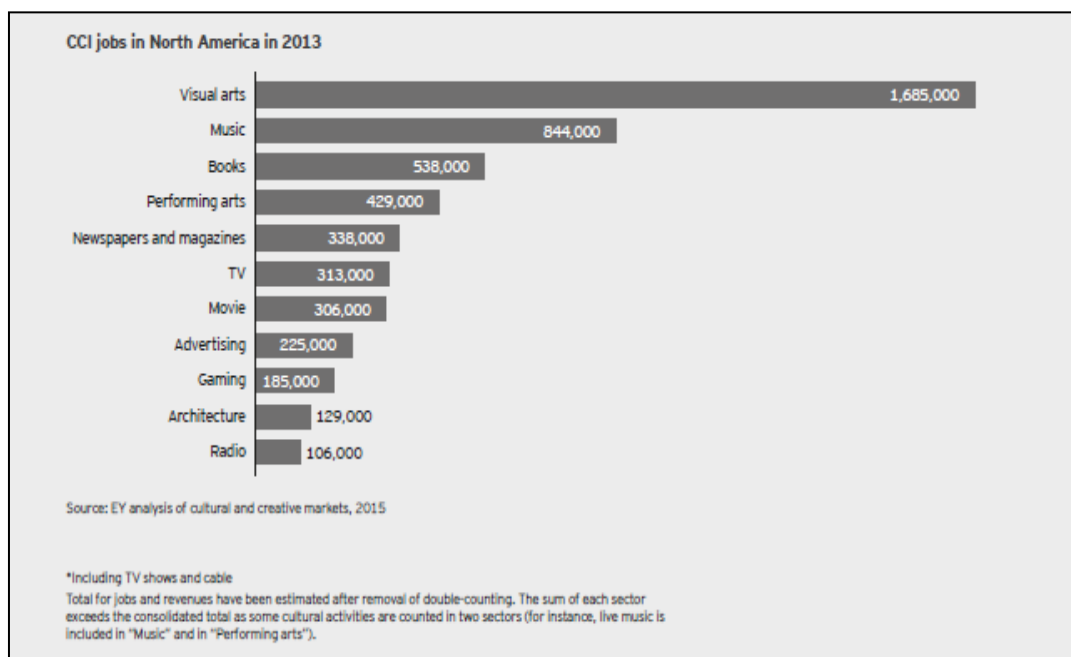


Fig.6.2.6. North America-Snapshot. CCI jobs in North America in 2013

Source: EY analysis of cultural and creative markets, 2015,

https://en.unesco.org/creativity/sites/creativity/files/cultural_times._the_first_global_map_of_cultural_and_creative_industries.pdf#page=8,%20accessed%20July%2014,%202020.

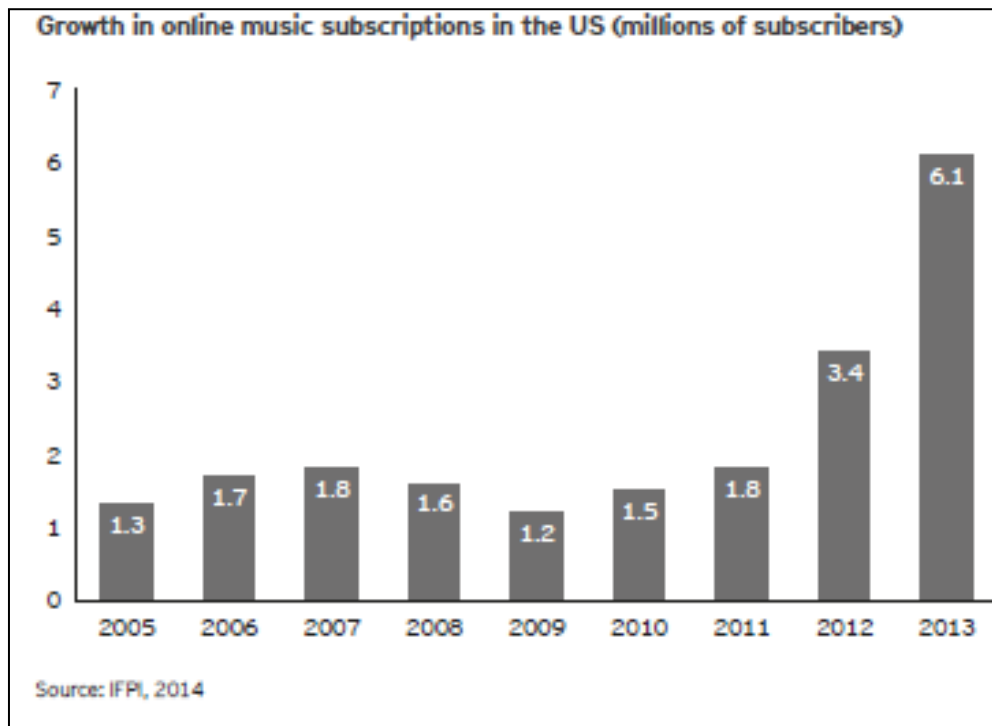


Fig. 6.2.7. Growth in online music subscriptions in the US
Source: IFPI, 2014

Between 2005 and 2013, a visible increase in online music subscriptions in the US was registered. Only from 2012 to 2013, the number almost doubled. Cultural aspects represented an issue of dissent within the TTIP rounds of negotiations. Traditionally, during trade negotiations conducted with non-EU partners, the Union has sought for its Member States' potential to define and implement national audiovisual and cultural policies, as to permit the preservation of cultural diversity. It was the case for negotiations on the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) as well as for the controversial TTIP, initiated in 2013, as we mentioned in the dedicated economic chapter.

If the US has manifested a strongly interest in gaining access to the audiovisuals market, the EU considers that, simply because of their cultural dimension, this kind of services should be treated distinctively. As a matter of consequence, in both bilateral and multilateral trade talks, the EU avoids including the audiovisuals field in any commitment enabling foreign competitors to enter the internal market.

An exception is represented by the EU' economic partnership with South Korea and Cariforum states (a group of Caribbean countries), allowing foreign companies to rejoice equal status in very narrow circumstances. The quota system for European audiovisual works is an example of the fact that the EU and its member countries are free to discriminate against non-EU providers of audiovisual services.

The EU wanted that the Preamble to TTIP underlined the EU-US relation is based on values respecting the EU's principles and goals in terms of foreign policy, emphasizing the Parties' right to support measures for promoting cultural diversity as presented in the 2005 UNESCO Convention. It is worth mentioning here that the US has not signed this Convention.

Although admitting that an agreement on TTIP was a very high priority for the Parts, leaders in Brussels conveyed "it should not impair the ability of the EU and its Member States to preserve and promote cultural diversity"²⁶. Growing concerns among professionals in the cultural field and the EP's position

²⁶ Androulla Vassiliou, *Speech: Cultural diversity and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership*, 17 May 2013, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_13_429, accessed July 10, 2020.

expressed in a 2013 resolution has determined the EC to “flag the sensitivity of this issue” and decide that “the cultural exception is not up for negotiation”²⁷.

It actually meant that audiovisual services, “public subsidies, financial obligations for broadcasters, taxes on film tickets, co-production agreements, linguistic policy measures, the functioning of channels invested with a public service remit and the existence of stockholding caps in channels and networks”²⁸ would not be included in the TTIP negotiating mandate on the EU’s side.

The EU position paper on Intellectual property (March 20, 2015) proposed three main copyright issues that the EU was seeking to address during the negotiations with the US counterparts. These included: “payment rights for broadcasting and communication to the public (public performance) for performers and producers in phonograms; a full right of communication to the public for authors in bars, restaurants and shops; and the right for creators of original works of art”²⁹ to resale their content.

The EU was already granting IP protection in these areas and it considered equally important that the US would have provided reciprocal terms to EU-rights-holders. On a different note, the EP’ Legal Affairs Committee opinionated that IP rights should not be covered by TTIP.

Calling upon a 2011 EP resolution on the cultural dimension of the EU’s foreign relations, envisioning a common EU strategy in this realm, the EC entrusted a consortium of cultural institutes - led by the Goethe Institute - to conduct preparations in 2013-2014. It involved a consultation process with a vast array of stakeholders, both Europeans and Americans, inspiring ideas about how to facilitate transatlantic cultural cooperation. Among the impediments invoked by participants were the time-consuming and quite costly US visa application process, information and guidance for young artists on how to operate in different cultural environments, taxation issues, little fund-raising for international projects.

The US represented the leading export market for European cultural products and in 2015 it comprised nearly 41% of the total exports, mostly in the field of “works of art”. From 2008 to 2015, a near 14% increase was registered. When it comes to imports, the US occupied the second place, outdistanced by China. The American share of imports (mainly in the same field of the “works of art”) also rose between 2008 and 2015 (from 22% to 29%).

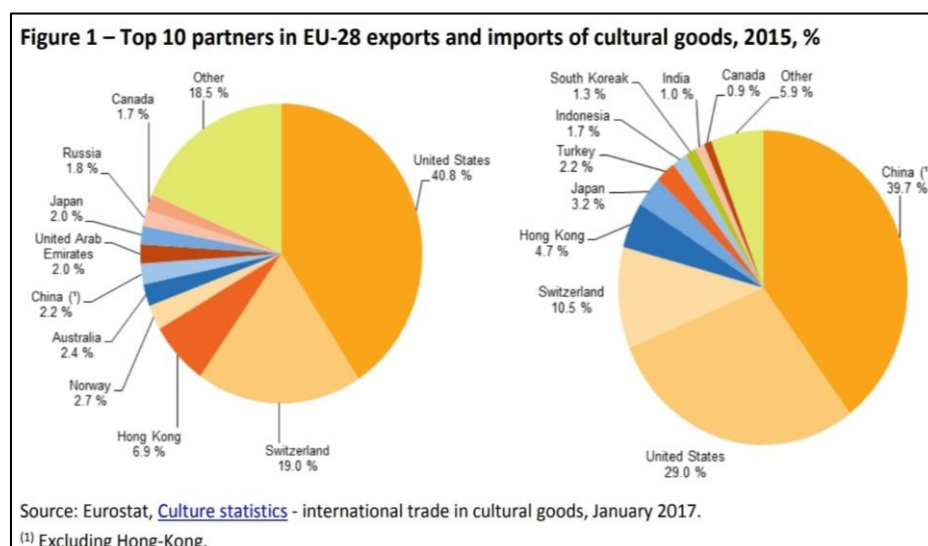


Fig. 6.2.8. Top 10 partners in EU-28 exports and imports of cultural goods, 2015, %

Source: Eurostat, https://euphthinktank.eu/2017/07/15/culture-in-eu-us-relations/export_cultural_goods/

²⁷ *Ibidem*.

²⁸ *Ibidem*.

²⁹ European Commission, *Intellectual property-EU position paper*, 20 March 2015, http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2015/april/tradoc_153331.7%20IPR%20EU%20position%20paper%2020%20March%202015.pdf, accessed July 10, 2020.

In 2016, the EC (represented by Commissioner for Education and Culture Tibor Navracsics) and the EU HR Federica Mogherini presented a Joint Communication entitled “Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations” (ICR), aimed at removing misconceptions about the EU and achieving overarching goals like “making the European Union a stronger global actor, a better international partner and a stronger contributor to sustainable growth, peace and mutual understanding”³⁰.

The document foresaw enhanced involvement by the Cultural Diplomacy Platform, consolidating the role of the EU delegations and offices worldwide, the creation of European Culture Houses (to develop common projects and offer scholarships, cultural and educational exchange programmes), further financial support for cultural activities and last but not least the tightening of bilateral relations with strategic partners like the US (the Euro-American Cultural Foundation).³¹

6.3. PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

In May 2018, the European Commission adopted the New European Agenda for Culture, enforcing the EU’s foreign relations. This was acknowledged as a central aspect of the Commission’s response to the December 2017 European Council’s mandate, enabling further steps towards EU cooperation tailored to the arising “societal challenges through the transformative power of culture”³², as the document stated.

The New European Agenda for Culture came with a new perspective encompassing a holistic approach to encourage connections and collaboration across different cultural sectors and with other relevant policies. To successfully implement the Agenda and the specific actions close cooperation between the EP, the Council and the Member States, but also stakeholders in the cultural realm was required. Policy collaboration was to be upheld in 2019 and 2020 by Creative Europe and other EU programmes designed to allocate funds for cultural projects. From 2021, this would have been the task of the upcoming programmes under the EU’s next MFF.³³

The European Council recognized ICR as one of its Work Plan priorities in culture for 2019-2022.³⁴

According to the Council’s Work Plan, ICRs of the EU should be aimed at raising awareness of the significant role that culture plays for the socio-economic environment, addressing important global challenges. From the holistic vision of the EU’s New Agenda, the Plan drew up a strategic, gradual approach to ICRs followed by concrete actions.³⁵

In 2019, the “Council Conclusions on an EU strategic approach to ICR” called upon member countries, the Commission, and the EEAS to enhance their coordination and strategic guidance as to properly promote ICRs.³⁶

In April 2020, the EU launched the Cultural Relations Platform (CRP) to support its engagement in international cultural relations. The project provided a new approach and a range of novel activities, all meant to foster and enable sustainable cultural exchanges, dialogue and co-creation between Europeans and other foreign individuals.

The CPR’s main goals are:

³⁰ European Commission, HR, *Joint Communication, Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations*, Brussels, 8.6.2016, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52016JC0029&from=EN>, accessed July 10, 2020.

³¹ Ivana Katsarova, *loc. cit.*

³² European Commission, *A New European Agenda for Culture*, *loc. cit.*, p.10.

³³ *Ibidem.*

³⁴ *Council conclusions on the Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022*, 2018, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018XG1221%2801%29>, accessed July 11, 2020.

³⁵ *Ibidem.*

³⁶ Cultural Relations Platform, <https://www.cultureinexternalrelations.eu/about-us-2-2/>, accessed July 11, 2020.

“1) Provide policy support on international cultural relations through conducting research, mappings, and in organising local meetings, conferences, workshops, and trainings;
2) Support cooperation among cultural and creative sectors in facilitating contacts and networking of different EU and third country cultural actors, including cultural institutions, private foundations, civil society, and other organizations; 3) Strengthen communities and networks of cultural practitioners in developing training programmes for cultural managers in leadership positions both within and outside of Europe”³⁷.

In terms of EU international trade in cultural goods, the figures below show that extra-EU imports increased more rapidly than exports between 2013 and 2018. The US was the forth larger import partner for European goods, after China, Switzerland and the UK and the third export partner, after Switzerland and the UK.

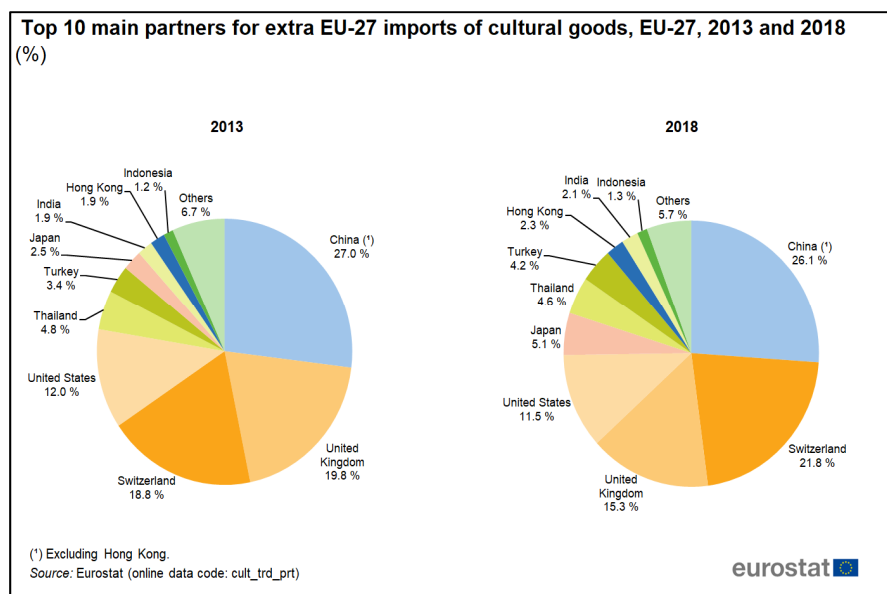


Fig.6.3.1. Top 10 main partners for extra EU-27 imports of cultural goods, 2013 and 2018

Source: Eurostat,

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/c/ca/Figure_8_Top_10_main_partners_for_extra_EU-27_imports_of_cultural_goods%2C_EU-27%2C_2013_and_2018_%25.png

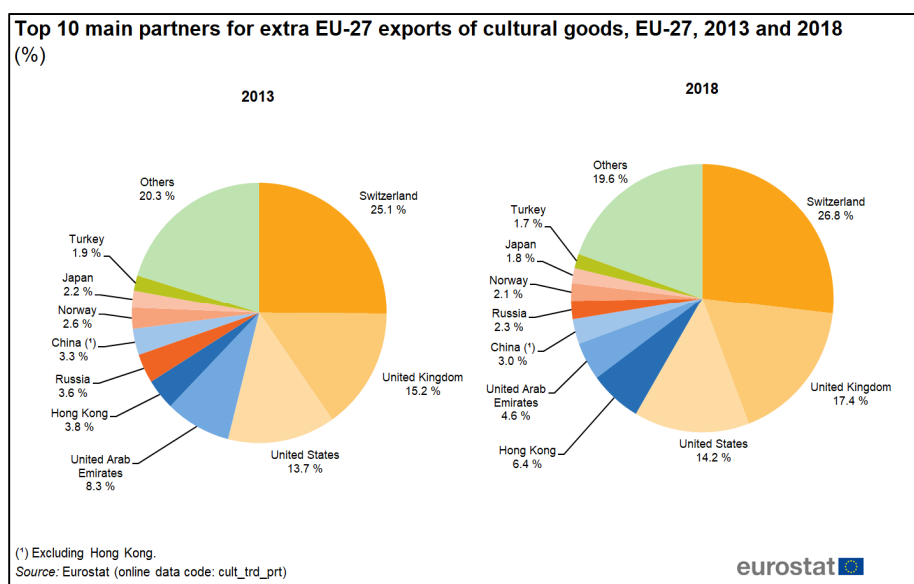


Fig. 6.3.2. Top 10 main partners for extra EU-27 exports of cultural goods, 2013 and 2018

Source: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Figure_7_Top_10_main_partners_for_extra_EU-27_exports_of_cultural_goods,_EU-27,_2013_and_2018.png

³⁷ Ibidem.

The 2020 EUNIC Statement assessed the impact of the coronavirus pandemic over the work of international cultural relations. Some of the major findings are depicted in the following figure.³⁸

- An estimated 6.6 million euros of income was lost by EUNIC members due to branches closing.
- 85% of members temporarily closed at least half of their branches worldwide.
- Almost half were forced to cancel contracts with artists and experts.
- More than half foresee discontinuing or downsizing programmes.
- 13% are concerned about staff downsizing.
- Of those members who had to resort to new ways of gathering income, 40% have started to charge for their cultural offerings and 30% have applied for private funding.
- 85% of members are not eligible to apply for emergency government funding.

Fig.6.3.3. EUNIC, Covid-19 effects on cultural relations work-major finding

Source: https://eunicglobal.eu/media/site/3913659306-1591806394/eunic-statement_make-cultural-relations-count.pdf

Invoking the joint statement by EU HR/VP Josep Borrell Fontelles and Commissioner Mariya Gabriel published on 21 May 2020 stating that “Culture is at the heart of progress: it can play a truly key role in the aftermath of the current crisis”³⁹, EUNIC representatives stressed that cultural relations must be central in the fight against the coronavirus outbreak consequences. “As culture has proven to be essential in sustaining our societies in moments of crisis, culture must be protected from budget cuts in the post-crisis financial frameworks and EU budgets for culture must be substantially increased”⁴⁰, the document reads.

Actors involved in the cultural sector were called upon to take measures enabling global cultural connections, so that shared cultural values might optimize international relations – hereby including support for EUNIC representatives; to look beyond national frontiers and get involved in multilateral efforts to manage the crisis; to continue investing in a common EU foreign policy including a suitable role for cultural relations; to consolidate the organizational and financial structure in the EU, to engage in the cultural realm; to support investments in European cultural cooperation, to sustain multilateral projects under the EU ICR strategy; to invest permanently in culture through development cooperation programmes; to consolidate the global dimension of “Creative Europe”; to develop the “European Spaces of Culture”; to prioritize support for local cultural scenes worldwide; to employ digital and hybrid ways (combining physical presence with virtual content) to function in cultural relations; and to exchange best practice models in a bottom-up process⁴¹.

In a nutshell, although it is not the main driver within the EU-US relation, the cultural realm and the institutionalized practice of bilateral cultural diplomacy, alongside with educational and scientific exchanges, represent an important sector where further enhanced transatlantic contacts can help ease cooperation entailing a much broader dimension, by the influential diffusion of European, American and shared Western values and ideas on each of the two sides of the Atlantic. Transatlantic trade on the cultural goods’ market should be further stimulated.

Of course, balance can be achieved through reasonable negotiation by the parts, providing a practical framework for artists and cultural entrepreneurs to manifest, while at the same time preserving the European principle to protect and support financially cultural and creative initiatives and networks. We strongly believe that the current crisis should be a trigger to invest in and support more the cultural field, so as to conserve the very identity, diversity and tradition of the European and American peoples.

³⁸ EUNIC, *Make cultural relations count*, loc. cit.

³⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

Comparing the European and the American cultural policies, we conclude that in the EU culture is best encouraged through a number of designed institutions for cultural manifestations. In the US, there is no central authority entrusted with this enterprise, and the accent is placed more on the commercial potential of the cultural act. Still, transatlantic trade in cultural goods reached significant values and the CCIs in Europe and North America occupy the second and the third place, respectively, at global level, after the Asia-Pacific countries.

CHAPTER 7.

CASE STUDY: ROMANIA - A STRATEGIC PILLAR WITHIN THE EURO-ATLANTIC COMMUNITY. SPECIFIC BENEFITS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

The last chapter of the present research introduces the case study, entitled “Romania - a strategic pillar within the Euro-Atlantic community. Specific contributions and benefits”, assessing the impact of Romania’s accession to the EU and NATO on its post-communist modernization process, as well as the country’s input to both organizations and, especially, to the consolidation of a strong transatlantic liaison in the post-1990 era.

7.1. ROMANIA – “INCOMING”: MODERNIZATION PROSPECTS

As we have presented in the first chapter, transformation in Eastern and Central European countries post 1989 has known a personalized pattern, according to a series of national economic, political, cultural and social characteristics and to different perceptions on the evolution of the international system.¹ Modernization was one concept to define this period of societal transformation. The EU’s enlargement towards Central-Southern-Eastern Europe as a modernization process in its immediate vicinity was also tightly connected with Union’s own process of transformation.

As political debates in Romania uncovered a certain degree of confusion regarding the ideal model of modernization, the Copenhagen accession criteria have shaped the political action towards the EU, aimed at fundamentally restructuring the country. This trend has also contributed to Romania’s preparation for NATO accession² and have thus explained the rapid association to the Partnership for Peace (1994) and the Snagov Declaration (1995) politically supporting in an uniform manner the quest to EU membership.

After 1995, “Occidental modernization” and “Europeanization” (understood as legislative and institutional harmonization) were the most preferred formulas to describe transformation in Romania. However, it is equally important to mention that genuine modernization automatically implied that European standards are not imposed but rather fully internalized in the society’s organic structure.³ Adoption of the *acquis communautaire* must have been supported by its effective application. Europeanization means in fact ample structural reforming of the national economy, the social, political and cultural systems.⁴

Vasile Pușcaș, Romania’s Chief Negotiator for EU accession argued that both prior to the accession and in the quality of Member State, Romania has rejoiced the most concrete and favorable chance to the process of evolution and modernization, in a synchronic and, especially, integrative format. He went as far as to observe that this opportunity was even greater than the modernization prospects prefigured in Romania after the First World War.

However, despite the fact that EU accession negotiations have offered extremely favorable transition periods (comparative to the other countries in the 2004-2007 enlargement wave), Romanian political leadership seemed to slowly decrease its enthusiasm and energy directed towards the European integration process and activism, and to neglect the imperative of an accelerated process of (internal) modernization. This

¹ Reimund Seidelmann (ed.), *EU, NATO and the Relationship Between Transformation and External Behaviour in Post-Socialist Eastern Europe*, Baden Baden: Nomos, Verlagsgesellschaft, 2002.

² Frank Schimmelfennig, *The EU, NATO and the Integration of Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

³ Vasile Pușcaș, “Aderarea la Uniunea Europeană și șansele modernizării României”, in Dan Dungaciu, Vasile Iuga, Marius Stoian (coord.) *Șapte teme fundamentale pentru România*, Bucharest: Rao, 2014, p.55.

⁴ Vasile Pușcaș, *Negotiating with the European Union*, vol. 3., Bucharest: Editura Economică, 2003.

has resulted in an inevitable discrepancy with other EU countries, fueling Romanian people's feelings of marginalization from the core of the European construction and the net benefits.⁵

7.1.1. ROMANIA'S BENEFITS FROM THE EU

The EU is Romania's most important trading partner. Trade relations with the European Community began before Romania's accession to the EU and were subsequently developed under the framework of trade agreements as part of the country's economic integration. Romanian exports dropped from 1990 to 1992, and they only reached upper levels in 1993. EU imports from Romania went about ECU 1.05 billion in the first half of 1994, up 40% on the same period in 1993, reducing the Union's trade surplus with the country to nearly ECU 150 million.

Table 7.1.1.1. Romania's trade relations with the EU (1990-1993)

	1990	1991	1992	1993
EU imports	1 617	1 467	1 402	1 684
EU exports	1 415	1 331	1 855	2 301
Balance	-202	-136	453	627

Source: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/MEMO_95_34

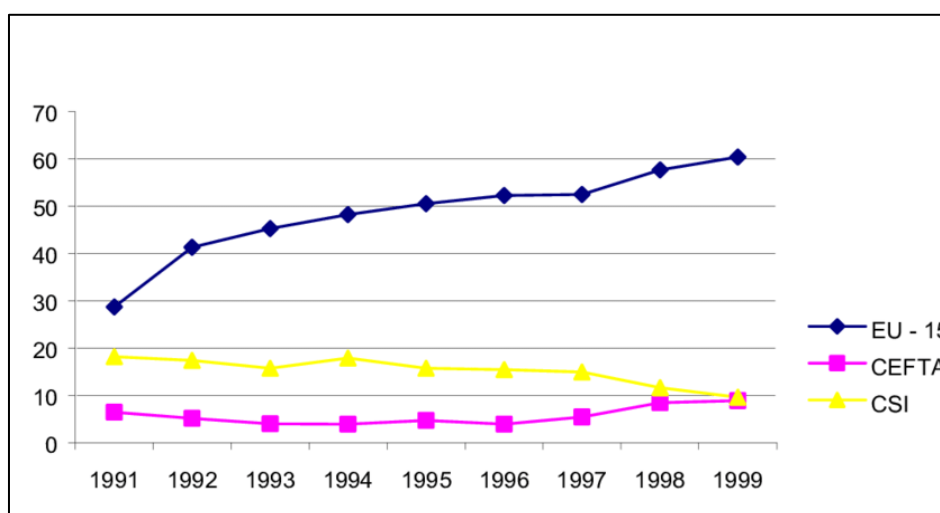


Fig. 7.1.1.1. Geographical distribution of Romanian imports (%)

Source: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Geographical-distribution-of-Romanian-imports_fig2_265023872

Trends in the last years have clearly shown that the share of intra-EU trade with Romania was above the value of the country's extra-EU trade. The figures below present these trends, for both goods and services. In 2017 and 2018, Romania's top three import partners were all EU countries: Germany, Italy and Hungary.

⁵ Vasile Pușcaș, "Aderarea la Uniunea Europeană și șansele modernizării României", in *op. cit.*, p. 58.

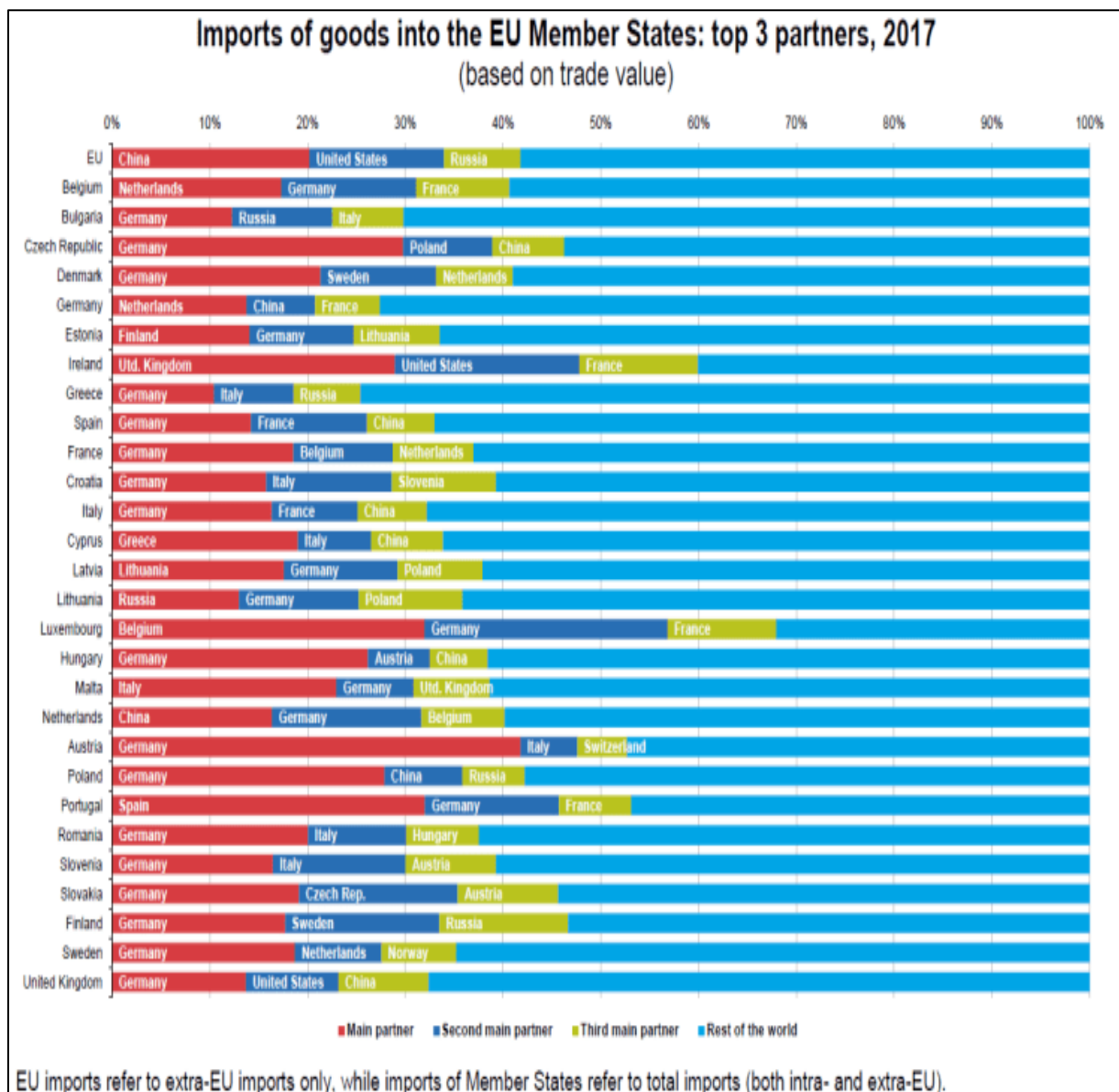


Fig.7.1.1.2. Imports of goods into the EU Member States: top 3 partners, 2017

Source: <https://textile-future.com/archives/8660>

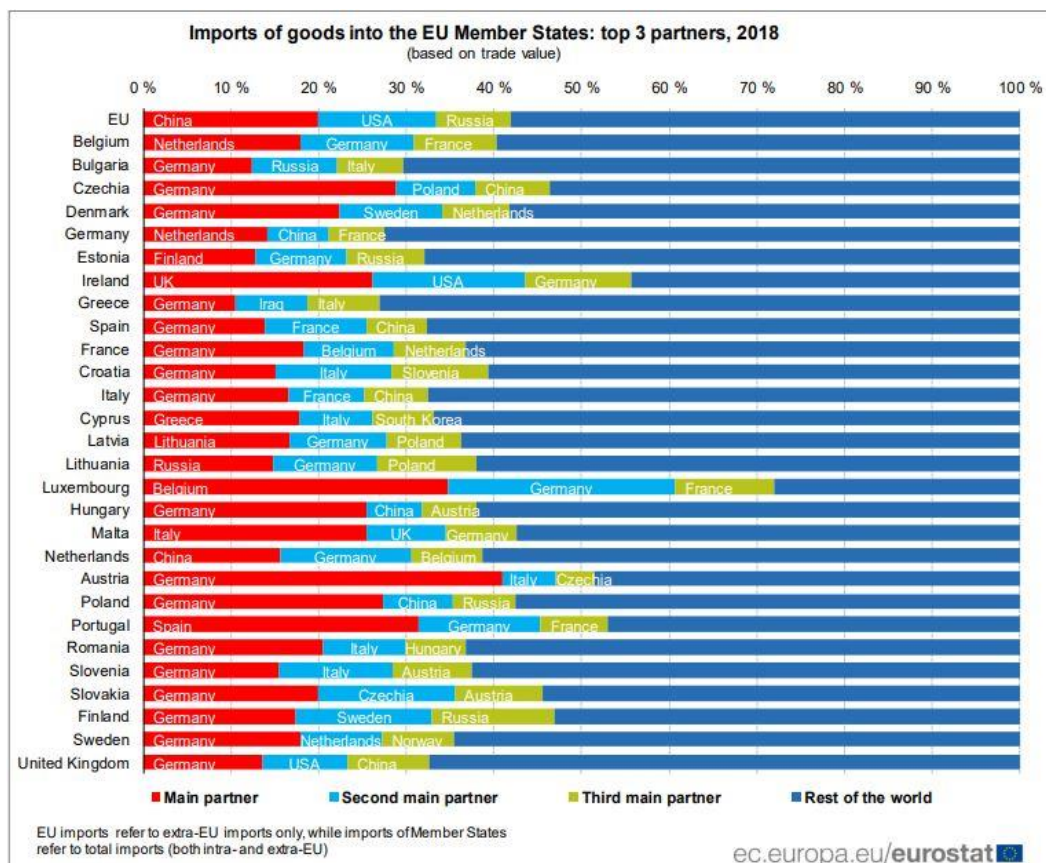


Fig.7.1.1.3. Imports of goods into the EU Member States: top 3 partners, 2018

Source: <https://www.hellenicshippingnews.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/iuytrdfghjhgfd2.jpg>

In 2018, Romania's intra-EU trade in goods was above 70% of the country's total trade.

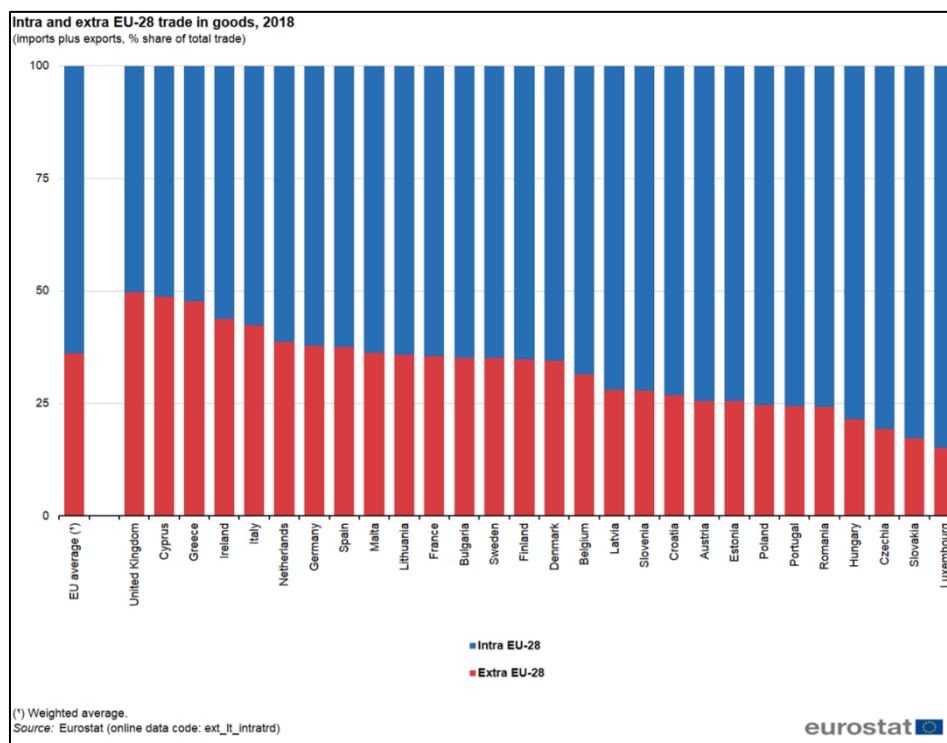


Fig.7.1.1.4. Intra and extra EU-28 trade in goods, 2018

Source: Eurostat, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/8/84/Intra_and_extra_EU-28_trade_in_goods%2C_2018.png

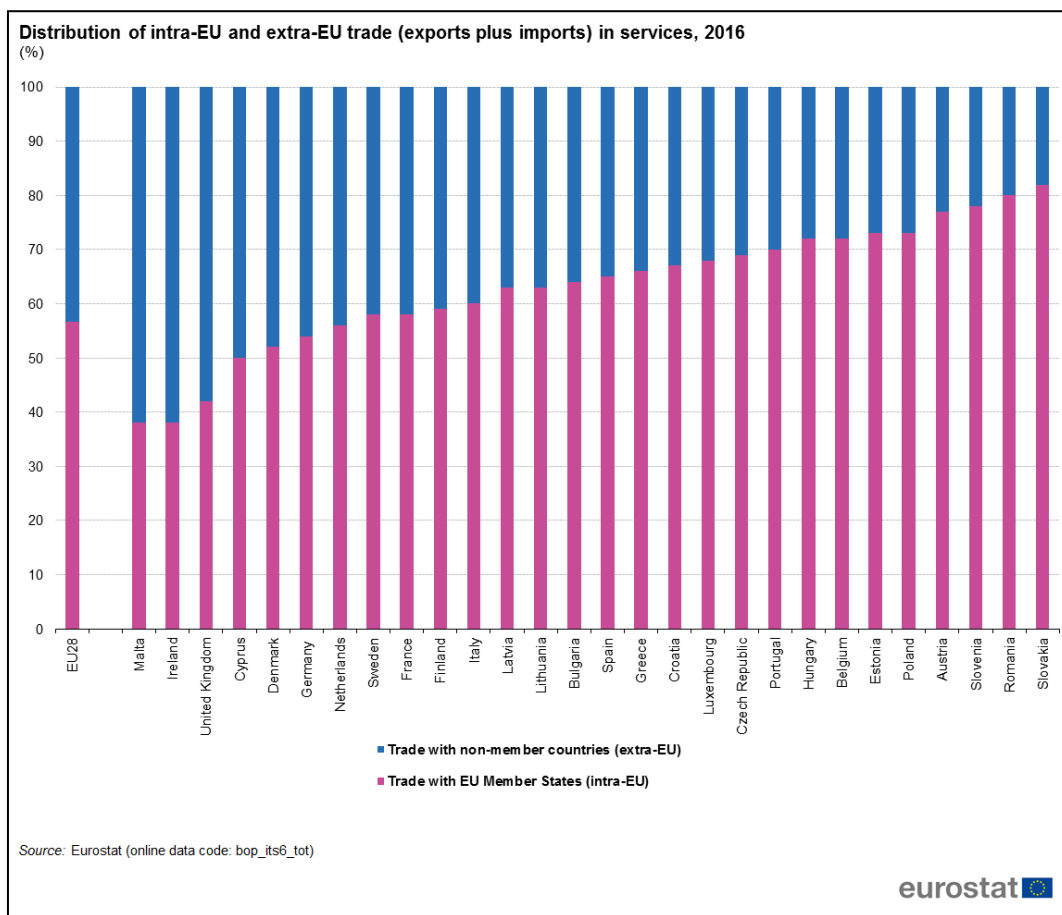


Fig.7.1.1.5. Distribution of intra EU and extra EU trade in services, 2016

Source: Eurostat, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/b/b9/Distribution_of_intra-EU_and_extra-EU_trade_%28exports_plus_imports%29_in_services%2C_2016_%28%25%29.png

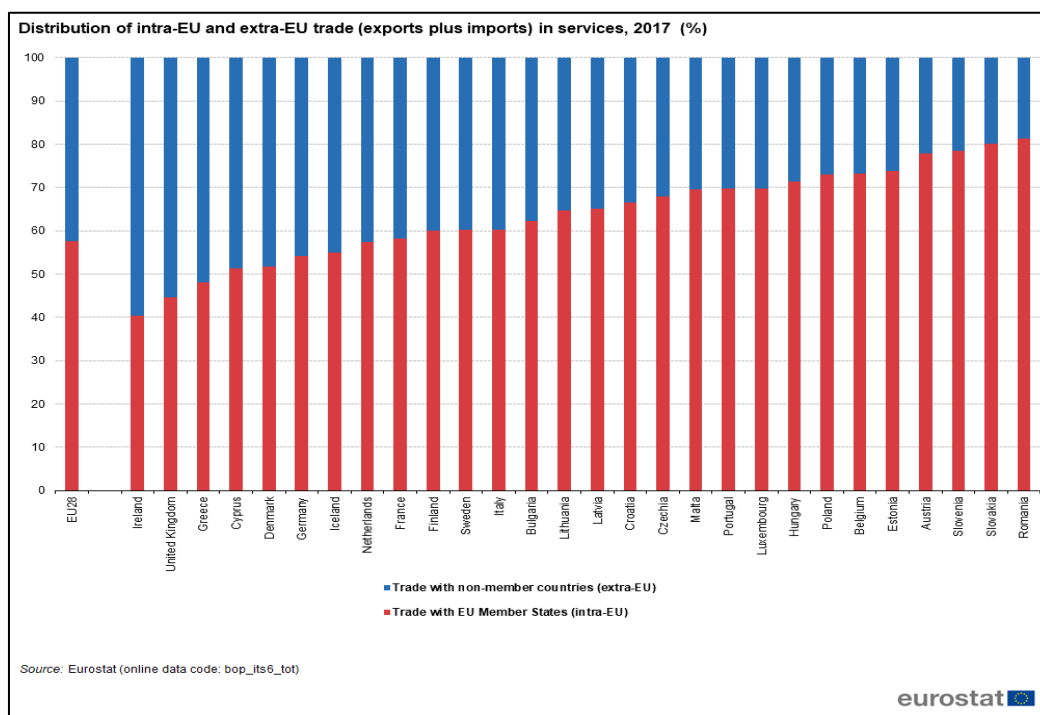


Fig.7.1.1.6. distribution of intra EU and extra EU trade in services, 2017

Source: Eurostat, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/archive/b/b9/20190318143244%21Distribution_of_intra-EU_and_extra-EU_trade_%28exports_plus_imports%29_in_services%2C_2016_%28%25%29.png

As the figures show, in 2016, Romania's intra-EU trade in services amounted to 80% of the total trade. In 2017, the level was above 80% and in 2018 it was higher than 70%.

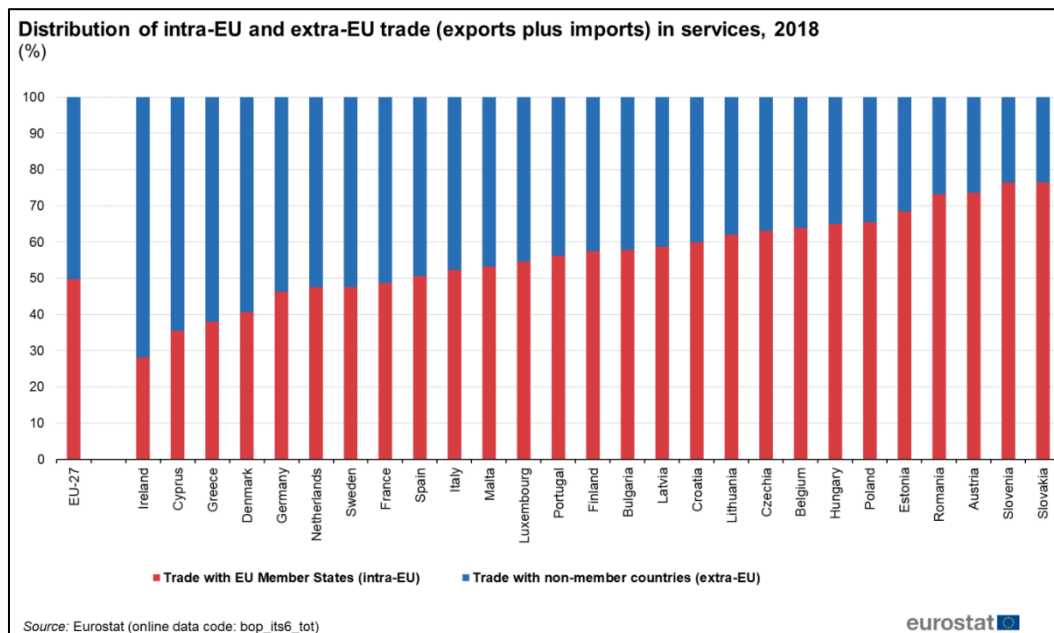


Fig.7.1.1.7. Distribution of intra EU and extra EU trade in services, 2018

Source: Eurostat, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/f/f3/Distribution_of_intra-EU_and_extra-EU_trade_%28exports_plus_imports%29_in_services%2C_2018_%28%25%29.png

The European integration modernization process has been facilitated not only through common norms and standards (for internal reforms) but also through corresponding financial instruments (structural and cohesion funds) designed for Member Countries. Through 8 national programmes, Romania has benefited from ESIF funding of EUR 30.8 billion which means around 1 548 euro per person over the period 2014-2020. The graphics below permit visualizations on the planning and implementation of the finances available, the EU payments to Romania and achievements at country level.⁶

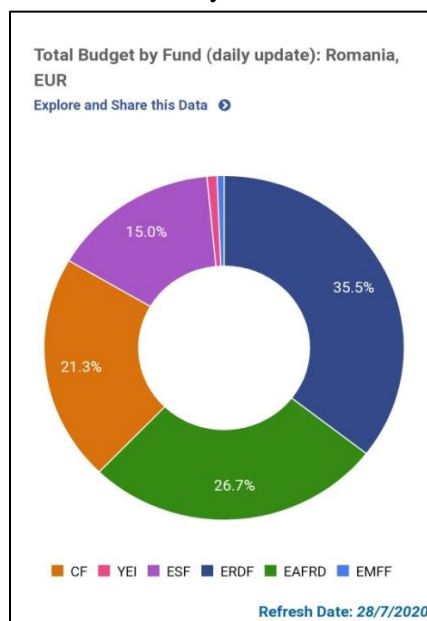


Fig. 7.1.1.8. Total budget by fund

Source: <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/countries/RO>

⁶ European Commission, *EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL AND INVESTMENT FUNDS, Country Data for: Romania*, <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/countries/RO>, accessed July 2, 2020.

Funds were mostly allocated for network infrastructure in transport and energy. Environment protection & Resource efficiency and Competitiveness of Small and Medium Enterprises were the second and the third largest sectors for which EU funds were designed in the case of Romania.

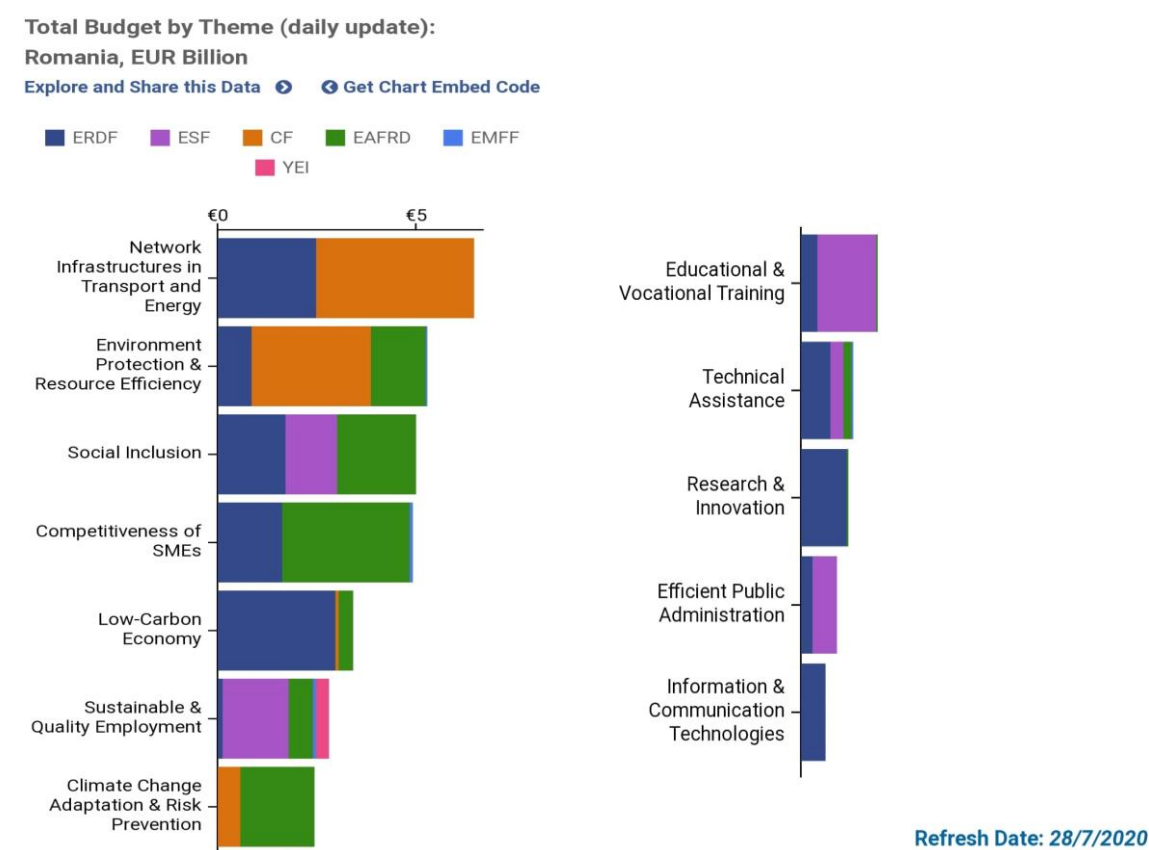


Fig. 7.1.1.9. Total Budget by Theme
Source: <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/countries/RO>

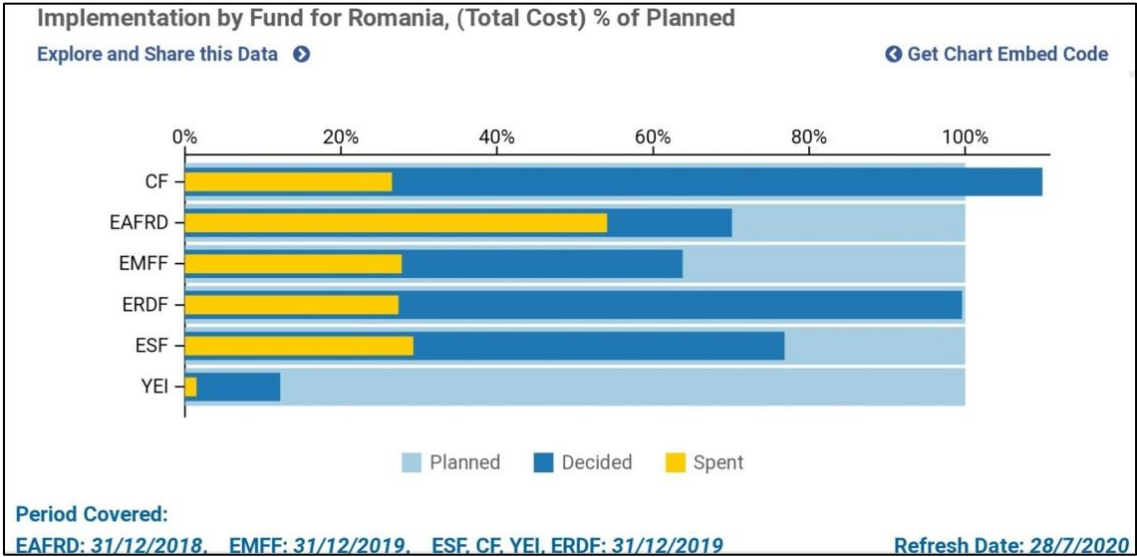


Fig. 7.1.1.10. Implementation by Fund for Romania
Source: <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/countries/RO>

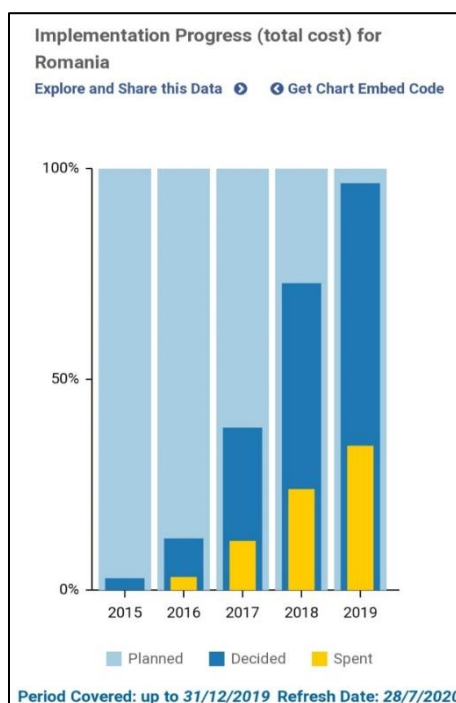


Fig. 7.1.1.11. Implementation Progress (total cost) for Romania

Source: <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/countries/RO>

Unfortunately, Romania has not fully grasped the benefits from EU financial instruments, as the figure above shows that the percentage of spent funds was little above 30% in 2019.

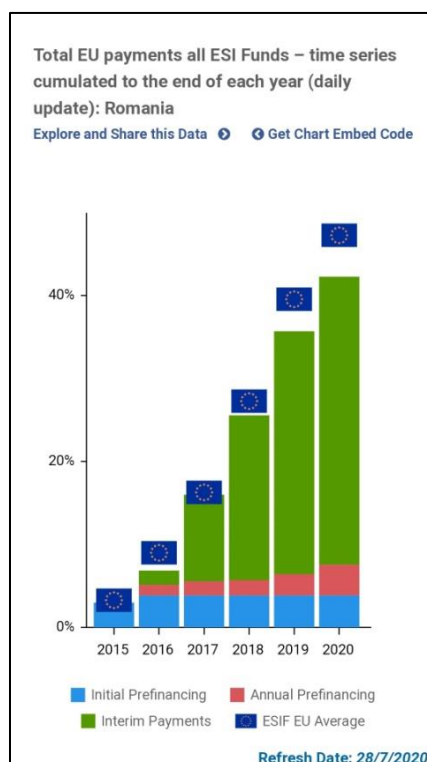


Fig. 7.1.1.12. Total EU payments all ESI Funds-time series cumulated to the end of each year

Source: <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/countries/RO>

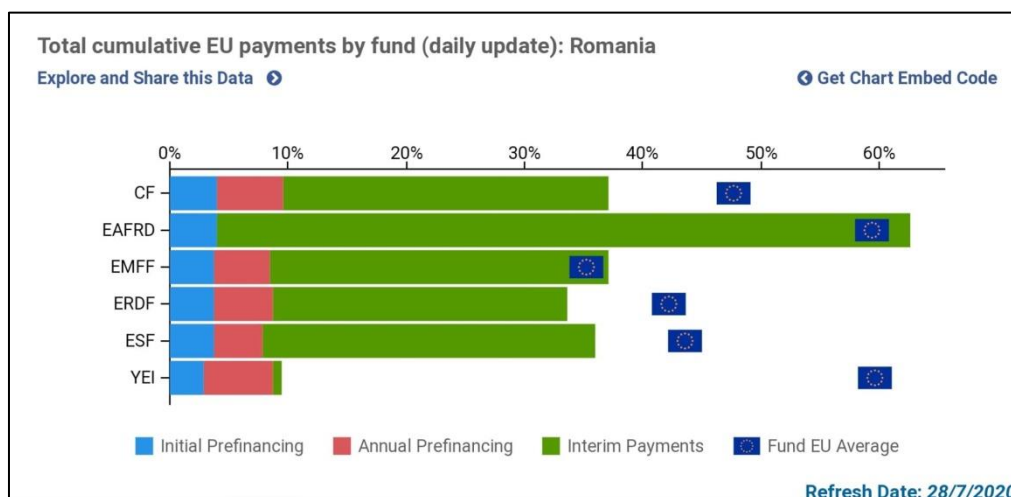


Fig. 7.1.1.13. Total cumulative EU payments by fund

Source: <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/countries/RO>

The following statistics shows that Romania is a net beneficiary in the EU. The 2007-2017 EU contribution to the Romanian budget was higher than that of Romania's to the EU.

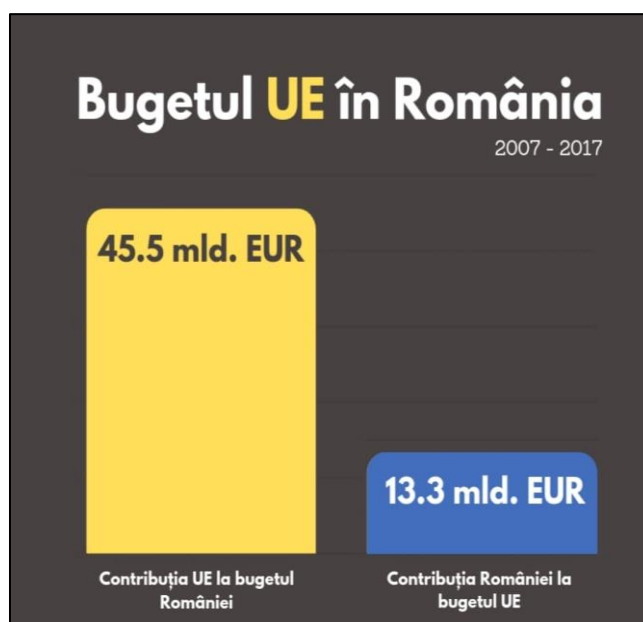


Fig. 7.1.1.14. The EU budget for Romania

Source: <https://financialintelligence.ro/statista-romania-printre-beneficiarii-neti-ai-bugetului-ue/>

7.1.2. US AND NATO'S INVESTMENTS IN ROMANIA

The Romania-US Strategic Partnership was launched on July 11, 1997, as “the natural product of the long-term objectives both countries share in central and southern Europe: the achievement of democracy, security, stability, and increasing prosperity based on market economic reforms”⁷. Though not offering specific military guarantees, the strategic agreement was aimed “to provide political, psychological and programmatic support”⁸ in order for Romania to continuously progressing in preparing its future NATO membership.

⁷ US Department of State, *U.S.-Romania Strategic Partnership*, https://1997-2001.state.gov/regions/eur/fs_usrom_strategic.html, accessed July 4, 2020.

⁸ *Ibidem*.

Important contributions to the Romanian-US Strategic Partnership had been developed between 2005 and 2011. On December 6, 2005, the two parts have signed the Agreement regarding the activities of US Forces in Romania. It provided the legal and political framework for the establishment of future US military bases in Romania. Later in 2011, they have signed the Agreement for a consolidated Strategic Partnership for the 21st Century. Sectorial engagement involved defense, arms control, fighting terrorism, trade and investment, energy security, democracy and the rule of law, education, research, science and technology.⁹

Romania's accession to NATO was the second (equally important) pillar of modernization/Occidentalization after the 1989 regime change along with European integration. Membership to the Western Alliance accounted for a strategic defence and security objective and a solid guarantee for regional stability and security. NATO and (trans) Atlanticism itself was understood as a cornerstone for Occidental values. This aspiration also found large support within the Romanian wider public.

Romania joined the PfP first, in 1994, and it has leading in active participation in exercises and activities, in the political consultation and collaborative initiatives of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. This involvement has eased its path towards NATO membership.

In October 1995 Romania signed the "Status of Forces Agreement". Although Romania was not invited to join the Alliance with the occasion of the Summit in Madrid in 1997, progress in fulfilling the NATO membership criteria has been acknowledged officially.

NATO Membership Action Plan, launched at the Washington summit in April 1999, has offered Romania and other countries willing to join the Alliance a road map to guide them efficiently during the preparations stage and to grow familiar with the rights and responsibilities of NATO. Participation in the Action Plan was not a warrant for future NATO membership, but it has undoubtedly given substance to the Alliance's "open door" policy.¹⁰

In 1999, Romania decided to commit to the Alliance's efforts in the Kosovo war and agreed that Czech and Polish units within KFOR international peacekeeping mission be allowed to transit Romania on their way to Yugoslavia. Previously, the Romanian Government and NATO representatives signed an agreement which permitted the Allied aircraft to use the Romanian air space.¹¹

In December 2002 and in January 2003, the first two accession negotiation rounds took place.¹²

On 26 February 2004, The Romanian Parliament unanimously passed the law on accession to NATO.¹³

In the past two decades, success has been achieved in terms of growing US-Romania bilateral trade and investment, extended scientific and educational exchange programs, the establishment of the Missile Defense Facility at Deveselu and expansion of cooperation at Mihail Kogălniceanu Base (including "the construction of a new railway and multimodal terminal, a new control center, several buildings and storage facilities, fuel storage facilities, and a new platform for cargo airplanes"¹⁴). The contract - approximated

⁹ Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, *Joint Declaration on Strategic Partnership for the 21st Century Between the United States of America and Romania*, September 13, 2011, https://media.hotnews.ro/media_server1/document-2011-09-14-10126005-0-parteneriatul-strategic-romania-sua-eng.pdf, accessed July 4, 2020.

¹⁰ Radu Bogdan, "Romanian reflections", in *NATO Review*, January 1, 2000, <https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2000/01/01/romanian-reflections/index.html>, accessed July 4, 2020.

¹¹ Ministerul Afacerilor Externe, *A chronology of Romania – NATO relationship*, <https://www.mae.ro/en/node/2131?page=2>, accessed July 4, 2020.

¹² Ministerul Afacerilor Externe, *A chronology of Romania – NATO relationship*, <https://www.mae.ro/en/node/2131?page=3>, accessed July 4, 2020.

¹³ Ministerul Afacerilor Externe, *A chronology of Romania – NATO relationship*, <https://www.mae.ro/en/node/2131?page=4>, accessed July 4, 2020.

¹⁴ VEDP International Trade, Defense and Security Market-Report Romania, June 2018, http://exportvirginia.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Defense_and_Security_Report_-Romania_July_2018.pdf, accessed July 4, 2020.

between USD 25-100 million -was to be attributed at the end of 2017, with a deadline to complete the work within a three-year period¹⁵), the combating of terrorism, transnational crime and human rights abuses.¹⁶

As another example of NATO involvement in Romania, Headquarters Multinational Division South – East (HQ MND-SE) was activated by the NAC as a NATO military body on December 1, 2015 in Bucharest. Thus, HQ MND-SE was officially incorporated into the NATO Force Structure (NFS) implementing the Readiness Action Plan (RAP) from Wales Summit, 2014. According with the NAC decision, the HQ MND-SE is ready for an Article 5 operation.¹⁷

After a number of seven negotiation rounds, in 2011 the “Agreement between Romania and the United States on the Deployment of the U.S. Ballistic Missile Defense System in Romania”, set the legal foundation for the defensive military project implemented at Deveselu military base.

Naval Support Facility at Deveselu is an installation of Commander, Navy Region Europe, Africa, and Southwest Asia, operating on 430 acres (175 hectares), and it is jointly hosted with the 99th Romanian Military. The installation is located roughly 110 miles southwest of Bucharest and 25 miles from the Bulgarian border.¹⁸



Fig. 7.1.2.1. NATO's Ballistic Missile Defence architecture as of 2019

Source: <https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2019/09/30/european-security-without-the-inf-treaty/index.html>

The inauguration of NATO's facility in Deveselu, a goal in line with vision of the National Defense Strategy, was received with great enthusiasm in Romania, as it represented the highest security level guaranteed on the long-term.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹⁶ US Embassy in Romania, *The 20th Anniversary of the United States – Romania Strategic Partnership*, <https://ro.usembassy.gov/20-years-strategic-partnership/>, accessed July 4, 2020.

¹⁷ Headquarters Multinational Division South – East (HQ MND-SE), *About*, <http://www.en.mndse.ro/about>, accessed July 4, 2020.

¹⁸ *Naval Support Facility Deveselu*, https://www.cnic.navy.mil/regions/cnreurfcent/installations/nsf_deveselu/about.html, accessed July 4, 2020.

Underlining NATO's continuous commitment to protect citizens and territories, Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg affirmed that the site at Deveselu showed the Alliance's adaptation to an uncertain world, strengthening our collective defence mission and investing over the long-term in the required capabilities.¹⁹

In 2017, with the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the US-Romania Strategic Partnership, Saber Guardian 17, the largest military exercise in our joint history with the American partners took place, between 11-20th of July. It was led by the US Army Europe (USAREUR) and Romanian Land Forces. Over 25,000 troops had conducted exercises across Romania Bulgaria and Hungary, to enhance interoperability with allied and partner countries, to demonstrate mutual defensive capacity and deepen bilateral bonds of security and friendship.²⁰ Saber Guardian exercise is organized on an annual basis, and it had been hosted rotatively by Romania, Bulgaria and Ukraine.²¹ The figure below describes all the exercises in the Black Sea Region, including Saber Guardian 17. Involved Brigade-level CPX (command post exercise) and Battalion-level FTX (field training exercise).



Fig. 7.1.2.2. Black Sea region exercises

Source: U.S. Army Europe press kit, see <https://t-intell.com/2017/07/23/a-swift-response-from-the-saber-guardian-recognizing-the-strategic-importance-of-the-black-sea-region/>

¹⁹ US Embassy in Romania, *NATO Secretary-General Stoltenberg at the Aegis Ashore Operationalisation Ceremony*, May 12, 2016, <https://ro.usembassy.gov/deveselu-nato-stoltenberg/>, accessed July 4, 2020.

²⁰ US Embassy in Romania, *The 20th Anniversary of the United States – Romania Strategic Partnership*, loc.cit.

²¹ Locotenent Alexandru Helerea, *Exercițiul multinațional SABER GUARDIAN-17*, July 18, 2017, <https://www.forter.ro/ministerul-apararii-nationale/exerci%C8%9Biului-multina%C8%9Bional-saber-guardian-17/28824>, accessed July 4, 2020.

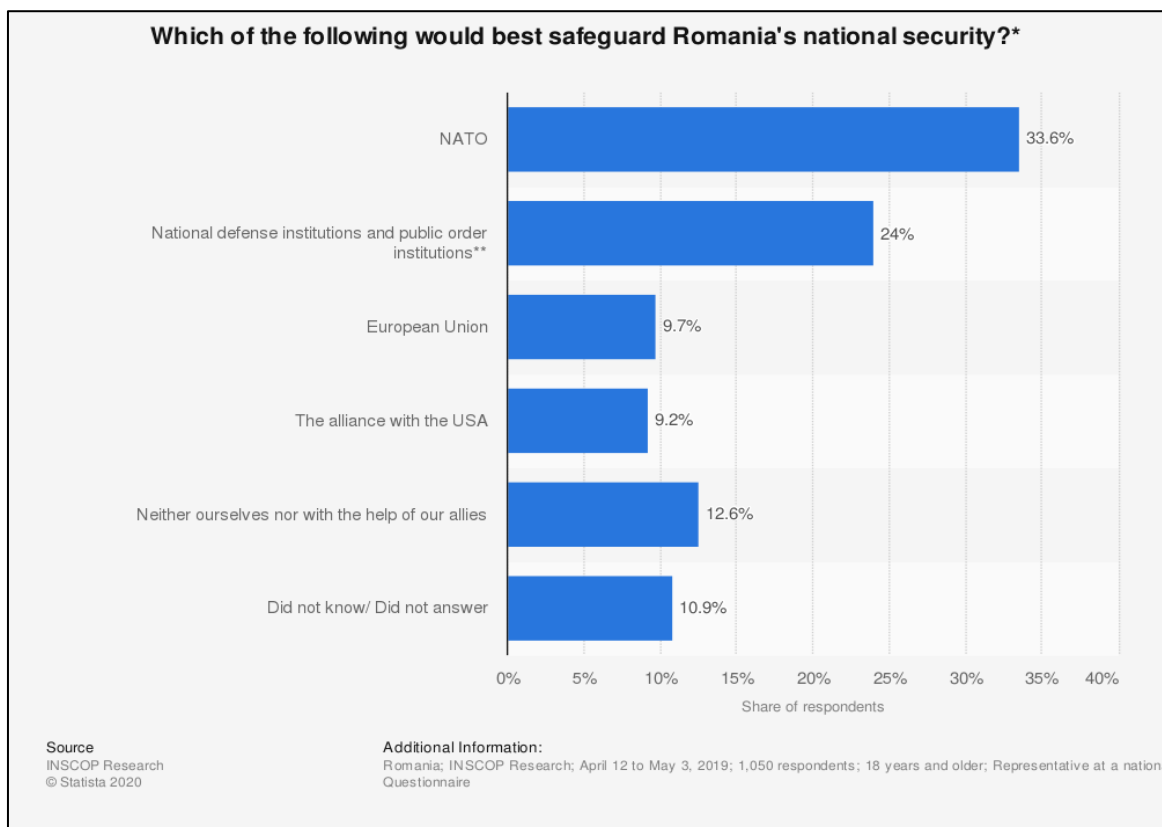


Fig. 7.1.2.3. Institutions safeguarding Romania's national security
Source: INSCOP Research

Concerning national security, a 2020 statistic has shown that Romanians feel best safeguarded by NATO, while the EU occupied the third place, after the national defense and public order institutions.

As a parenthesis, on the same note, the President of the Foreign Investors Council remarked back in 2018 that foreign investors choose Romania for its market economy, its liberal democratic regime and the fact that it is part of the Euro-Atlantic institutional structures. He also drew attention to the country's large market with a strategic position and the well-educated human resource.

We remind in this context of the most favored nation clause that the US granted Romania in 1975. It was the first country in the former Soviet bloc to receive this treatment. The clause marked the application of a "politics of difference" as it has underlined perceptions about Romania as a country attempting to build its gradual independence from the former USSR. Amplifying relations with the West (US especially) could have encouraged this trend. Romania has twice lost the treatment granted by the clause (in 1951 and in 1988) and it will have only regained this preferential status at the end of 1993.²²

Data until 2016 showed that the three main countries having invested in Romania were all EU countries, jointly representing around 50% of the total FDI in the country.

²² Vasile Pușcaș, "Sticks and Carrots": *Regranting the Most-Favored-Nation Status for Romania: (U.S. Congress, 1990-1996)*, Cluj-Napoca: Eikon, 2006.

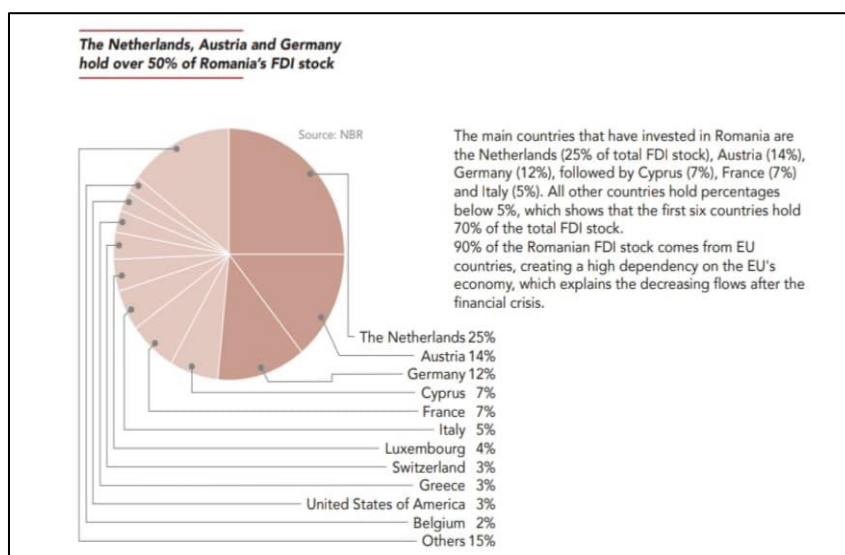


Fig. 7.1.2.4. The Netherlands, Austria and Germany hold over 50% of Romania's FDI stock

Source: Foreign Investor Council, <http://fic.ro/Documents/view/Report-Foreign-Direct-Investment-Development-and-Importance-in-Romania>, from NBR

The same trend has maintained, as figures below for 2018 show (according to NBR 2019 data). The difference is that the US fell on the 19th place as a foreign investor in Romania, while in 2016 they were on the 10th place.

Table 7.1.2.1. Foreign direct investment in Romania by country of origin as of December 31, 2018

	EUR million	% of total FDI
TOTAL	81,124	100.0
The Netherlands	19,389	23.9
Germany	10,298	12.7
Austria	9,915	12.2
Italy	7,669	9.5
Cyprus	5,015	6.2
France	4,919	6.0
Switzerland	3,641	4.5
Luxembourg	3,439	4.2
Belgium	2,276	2.8
United Kingdom	1,711	2.1
Czechia	1,639	2.0
Spain	1,634	2.0
Greece	1,335	1.6
Hungary	1,223	1.5
Poland	786	1.0
Denmark	730	0.9
Sweden	626	0.8
Turkey	577	0.7
United States	542	0.7
Japan	424	0.5
Ireland	401	0.5
Israel	313	0.4
Bulgaria	284	0.4
Portugal	263	0.3
United Arab Emirates	260	0.3
Norway	219	0.3
Virgin Islands, British	171	0.2
Malta	144	0.2
Canada	130	0.2
South Korea	105	0.1
Serbia and Montenegro	101	0.1
Other countries*	945	1.2

* countries whose investment was less than EUR 100 million

Source: NBR Romania, *Foreign Direct Investment in Romania in 2018*,
<https://www.bnr.ro/PublicationDocuments.aspx?icid=14364>

It is worth mentioning that foreign companies are an important contributor to Romanian imports. According to 2016 data, these companies represented averagely 60% of total imports. These imports, in terms of nominal value, were higher than their exports. It is explained by Romania's mostly consumption-based economic growth. For instance, large-scale and retail firms imported in 2015 goods amounting over EUR 22 bn. A substantial part of FDI companies are in this field.

The same pattern applies to Romanian exports, as the figures below present. Foreign investors were usually multinationals with advanced know-how compared to local businesses.

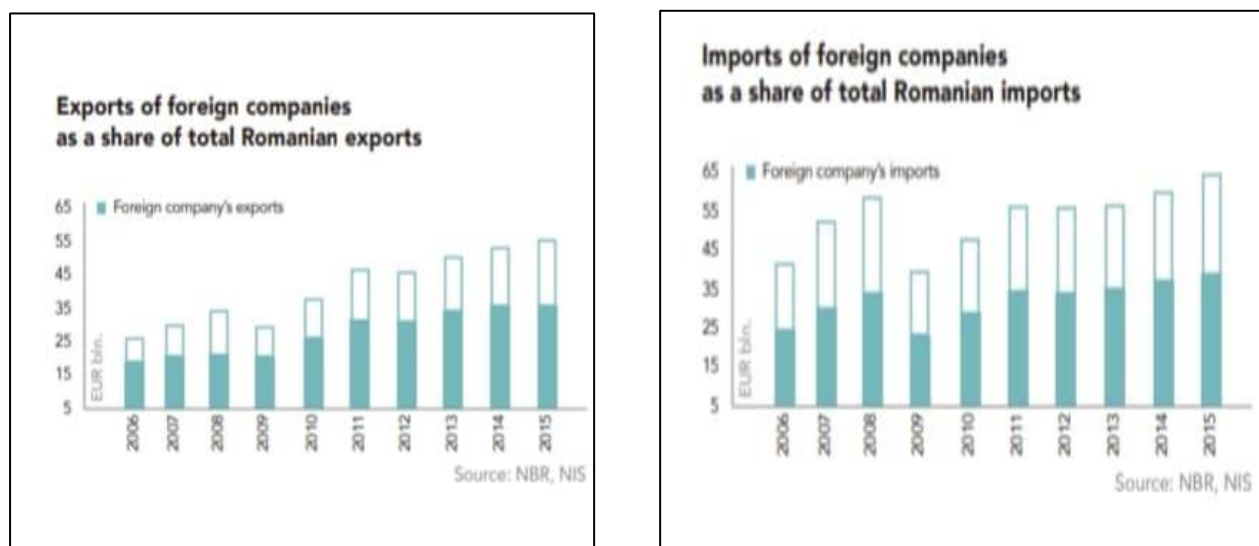


Fig.7.1.2.5. Exports and imports of foreign companies as a share of total Romanian exports/imports

Source: Foreign Investors Council, <https://fic.ro/Documents/view/Report-Foreign-Direct-Investment-Development-and-Importance-in-Romania>, from NBR, NIS

7.2. ROMANIA - “OUTGOING” - A STRATEGIC PILLAR WITHIN THE TRANSATLANTIC RELATION

In this part, we are going to analyze the specific contribution Romania has brought to the EU and NATO, in its quality of Member State, from 2007 and 2004 respectively onwards as well as its actual and potential contribution to the preservation of a sound transatlantic relationship in the future.

7.2.1. ROMANIA’S CONTRIBUTION TO THE EU SINCE 2007

The EU represents Romania’s most important trading partner when it comes to exports, too. Intra-EU trade outweighed Romania’s trade with other non-EU countries, as various statistics have shown (2017, 2019).

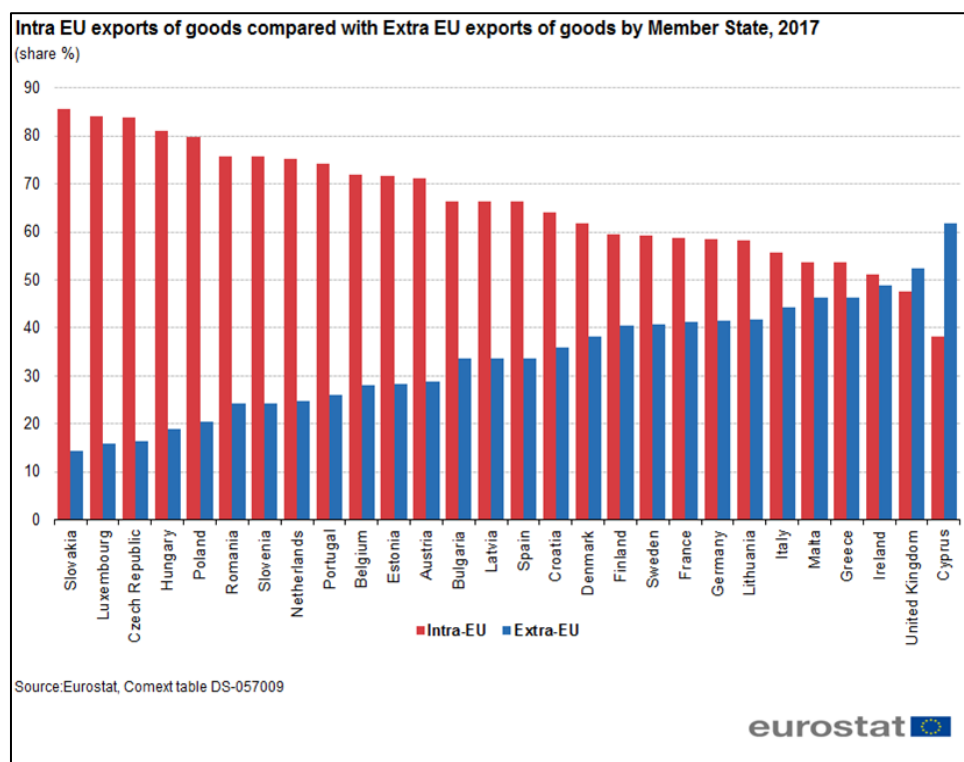


Fig. 7.2.1.1. intra EU exports of goods compared with extra-EU exports of goods by Member State, 2017

Source: Eurostat, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/e/e0/Intra_EU_exports_of_goods_compared_with_Extra_EU_exports_of_goods_by_Member_State%2C_2017_%28%25%29.png

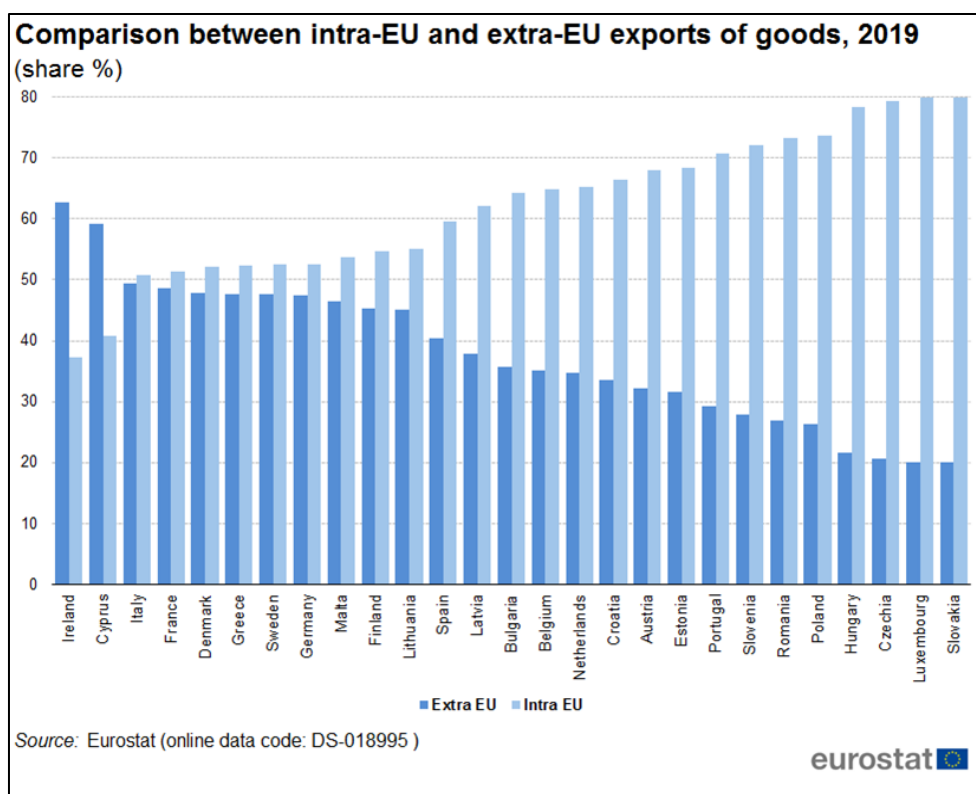


Fig. 7.2.1.2. Comparison between intra EU and extra EU exports of goods, 2019

Source: Eurostat, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/6/63/Comparison_between_intra-EU_and_extra-EU_exports_of_goods%2C_2019.png

Romania's most important export countries in 2019 were Germany (23%), Italy (11%) and France (7%). Data for 2021 looked the same, according to a Statista analysis.²³

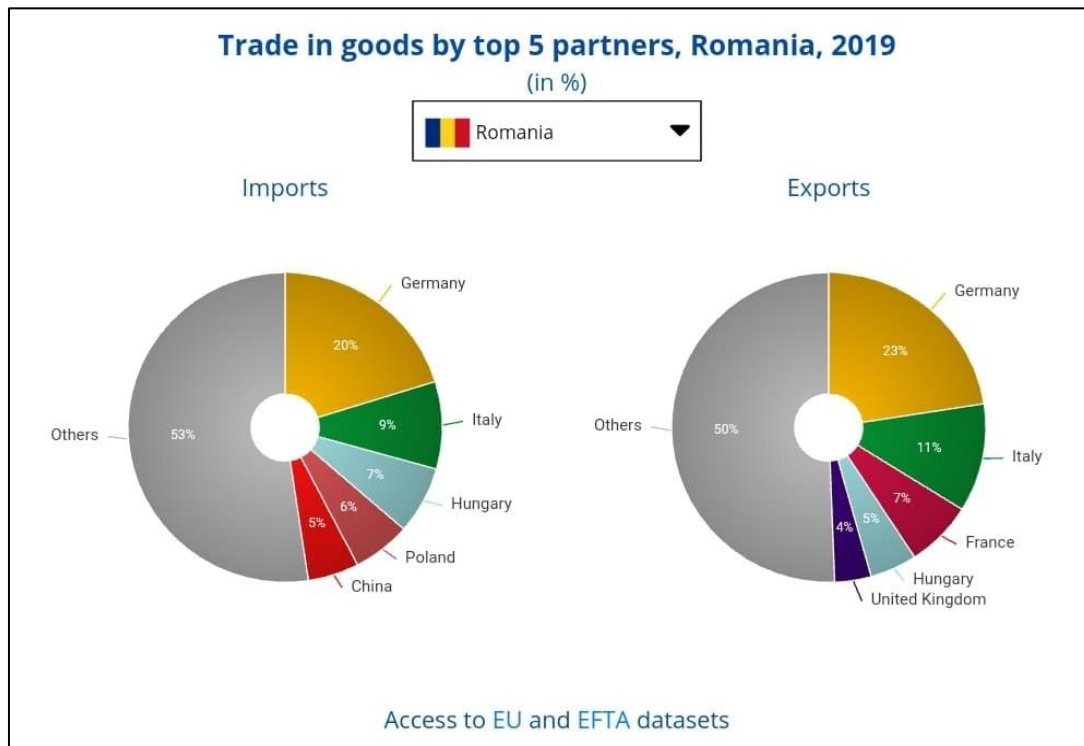


Fig.7.2.1.3. Trade in goods by top 5 partners, Romania, 2019

Source: Eurostat, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Extra-EU_trade_in_goods



Fig. 7.2.1.4. Romania's major exports as of 2019

Source: <https://www.countryaah.com/romania-major-trade-partners/>

From the figure above, we can see that Romanian exports to the US amounted only at 2.8% in 2019, compared to some of the EU countries, where the level was higher.

²³ Statista, *Main export partners for Romania in 2021, by export value (in million euros) **, Jan 24, 2023, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1094615/export-partner-countries-romania/>, accessed May 16, 2023.

7.2.2. ROMANIA'S CONTRIBUTION AS A NATO MEMBER

The 1991 United Nations UNIKOM mission in Kuwait opened up Romania's participation in international operations, as the Gulf conflict has escalated. Romania's involvement has constantly increased, with a lasting participation abroad for ISAF, an international mission in Afghanistan under NATO leadership. Beginning in 2002 (even prior the country's accession to NATO) it involved a military police platoon and a C130 airplane, permanently enhanced to meet the specificities of the operations theater. The Air Naval Forces have also deployed some of their manpower in various theatres of operations.

The crises in the Middle East and North Africa determined Romania's involvement in the "Unified Protector" (April - July 2011), with a view to impose an arms embargo on Libya. The operation involved 221 "King Ferdinand" Frigate and it acted as an active contributor to the Allied effort to terminate the crisis.²⁴

The last 25 years saw Romanian Armed Forces' missions evolving significantly, "from simple to complex ones, from individual missions performed with observers to missions conducted with contingents counting over 2,000 soldiers, and also from medical assistance missions to counterinsurgency and finally to institutional assistance and training missions"²⁵. Quantitatively speaking, Romanian Forces have taken part in over 100 multinational exercises, designed and conducted in collaboration with allies and partners.

Over 2004-2014, Romania has taken part in peacekeeping actions with almost 40 thousand soldiers, which propelled the country on the first place among contributor Member States to Allied operations.

Romania accounted for both a contributor and a beneficiary of post-2014 security and defense initiatives, with the aim of boosting the Alliance's security and, automatically, that of the country itself. Romania is a proactive actor in the field of defense, at military, political-military and diplomatic levels and it rejoices an enhanced Allied presence on its territory as well as in the Black Sea area.

Following a set of proposals advanced by Romania, a tailored NATO forward presence was established in the land, air and maritime fields. A Multinational Brigade hosted in Craiova and a Combined Joint Enhanced Training Initiative (CJET) have been rendered operational in 2018, facilitating Allies' affiliation and troops disposal in Romania for integrated training, increasing their interoperability and defense capability.

Alongside with boosting the Black Sea region's security, Romania has contributed to the implementation of enhanced forward presence by deploying with the UK a unit in Poland, as part of the US-led battle group.²⁶ The table below presents Romanian manpower participating in international missions, including in the NATO framework (in Kosovo, Afghanistan and other regions such as in Poland-an Air Defense Brigade).

Table 7.2.2.1. Manpower participating in international missions

THEATRE OF OPERATIONS:	MANPOWER PARTICIPATING IN INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS						
	NATO		MISSIONS UNDER THE AEGIS OF EU				MANPOWER
			Observation and monitoring missions	Training and counseling missions	EUNAVFOR	UNO	
BOSNIA - HERZEGOVINA	—	—	—	—	—	—	40
KOSOVO	KFOR: 55	—	—	—	—	—	55
AFGHANISTAN	693	—	—	—	—	—	693
OTHER	Air Defense Brigade Poland 120	Defense Staff manpower & liaison personnel 11	EUMM GEORGIA 2	EUTM (RCAY) SOMALIA/ MALI/ UCRANIA 9/1/1/0	1/1	MILITARY OBSERVERS & MONITORS 24	176
TOTAL	879	—	40	11	3	24	964

Source: MoD, updated June 25, 2018

Source: Ministry of Defense, updated June 25, 2018, http://exportvirginia.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Defense_and_Security_Report_-Romania_July_2018.pdf

²⁴ VEDP International Trade, Defense and Security Market-Report Romania, *loc. cit.*, pp. 11-12.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 12.

²⁶ VEDP International Trade Report, *loc. cit.*, pp.10-12.

In 2017, Romania spent the most on equipment acquisition out of NATO countries, calculated from the country's total defense expenditure. From 2010 figures rose constantly to more than double in 7 years' time (2010-2017).

Table 7.2.2.2. Defense spending

		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Defense spending	RON	6,630	7,255	7,282	8,160	9,014	10,337	10,738	14,765
	y-o-y	-	+9.42%	+0.37%	+12.05%	+10.4%	+14.6%	+3.87%	+37.5%

Source: NATO data and own calculations

Source: NATO and VEDP- Defense and Security Market Report Romania
June 2018, http://exportvirginia.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Defense_and_Security_Report_-Romania_July_2018.pdf

In 2017, the largest expenditure was reserved to the defence personnel, followed by investments in defense equipment.

Table 7.2.2.3. Distribution of defense expenditure by main category

Distribution of defence expenditure by main category								
Percentage of total defence expenditure								
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017c
Equipment	8.80	7.57	4.14	10.71	15.77	19.65	20.43	33.20
Personnel	79.07	79.11	84.00	78.99	71.15	63.30	65.01	54.67
Infrastructure	1.81	1.47	1.19	1.16	1.09	1.27	2.77	2.09
Other	10.32	11.85	10.68	9.13	11.98	15.78	11.79	10.04

Source: NATO data

Source: NATO data, http://exportvirginia.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Defense_and_Security_Report_-Romania_July_2018.pdf

The next figure describes the evolution of defense expenditure from 2014 to 2019.

In 2014, Romania allocated less than 1, 5%.

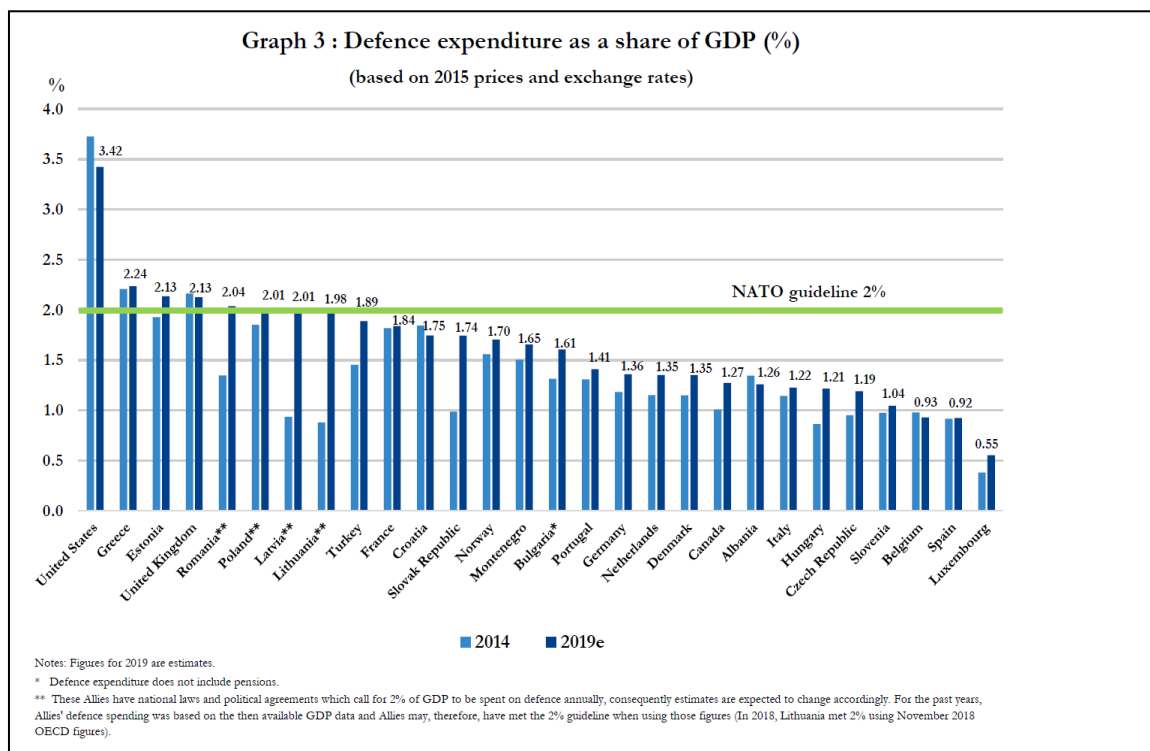


Fig.7.2.2.1.Defense expenditure as share of GDP (%)

Source: NATO, https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pictures/stock_2019/slide2-v3.jpg.

In 2019, Romania was expected to exceed the 2% defense spending criterion.

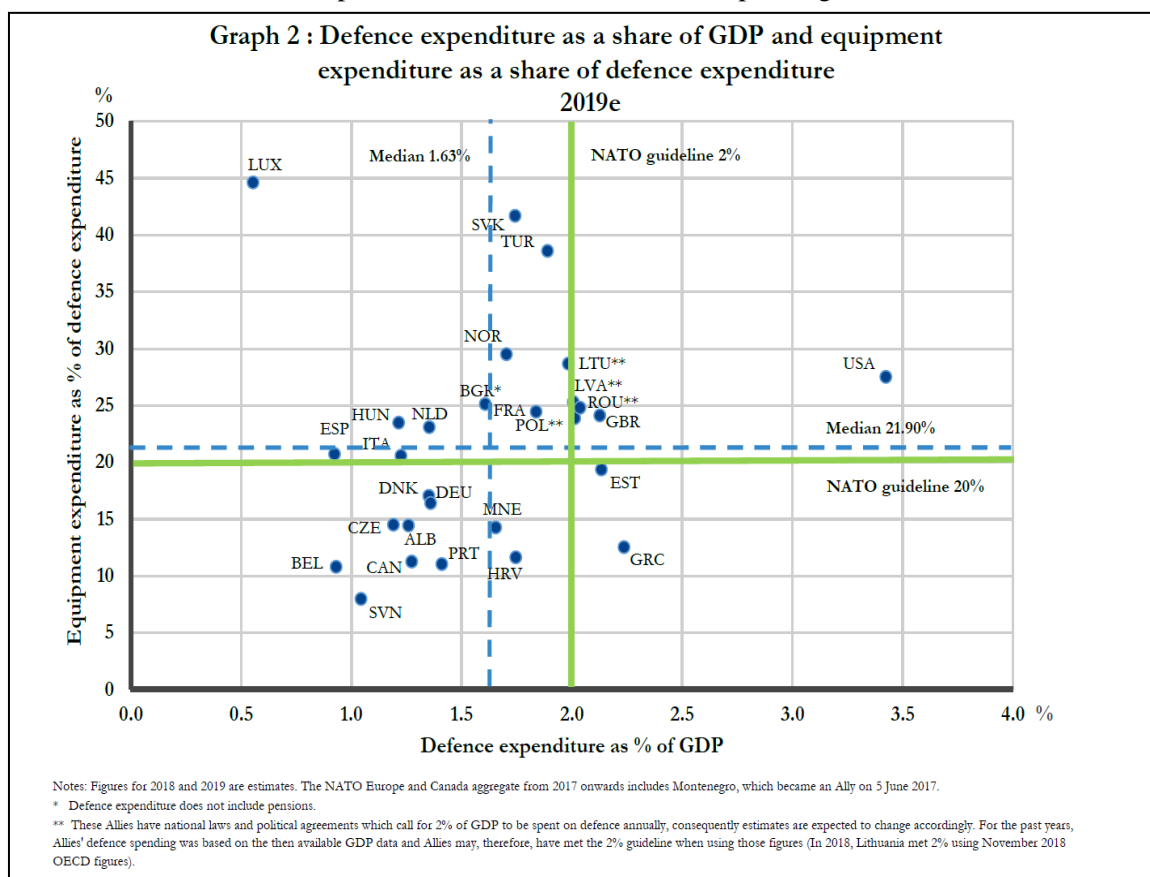


Fig.7.2.2.2 Defense expenditure as a share of GDP and equipment expenditure as a share of defense expenditure

Source: NATO. See

https://i1202.photobucket.com/albums/bb366/IWF11/2019%20blog%20photos/pasted%20image%200%201_zps0mpmn58b.png

However, this goal was attained in 2020, but the trend reversed in the next couple of years, and the defense budget only reached 1.86 % of GDP in 2021 and 1.75% in 2022 (see figure below). In 2023, influenced also by the war context in its vicinity, Romania decided to invest more in defense and so the prospects for military budget rose to 2.5% of GDP.

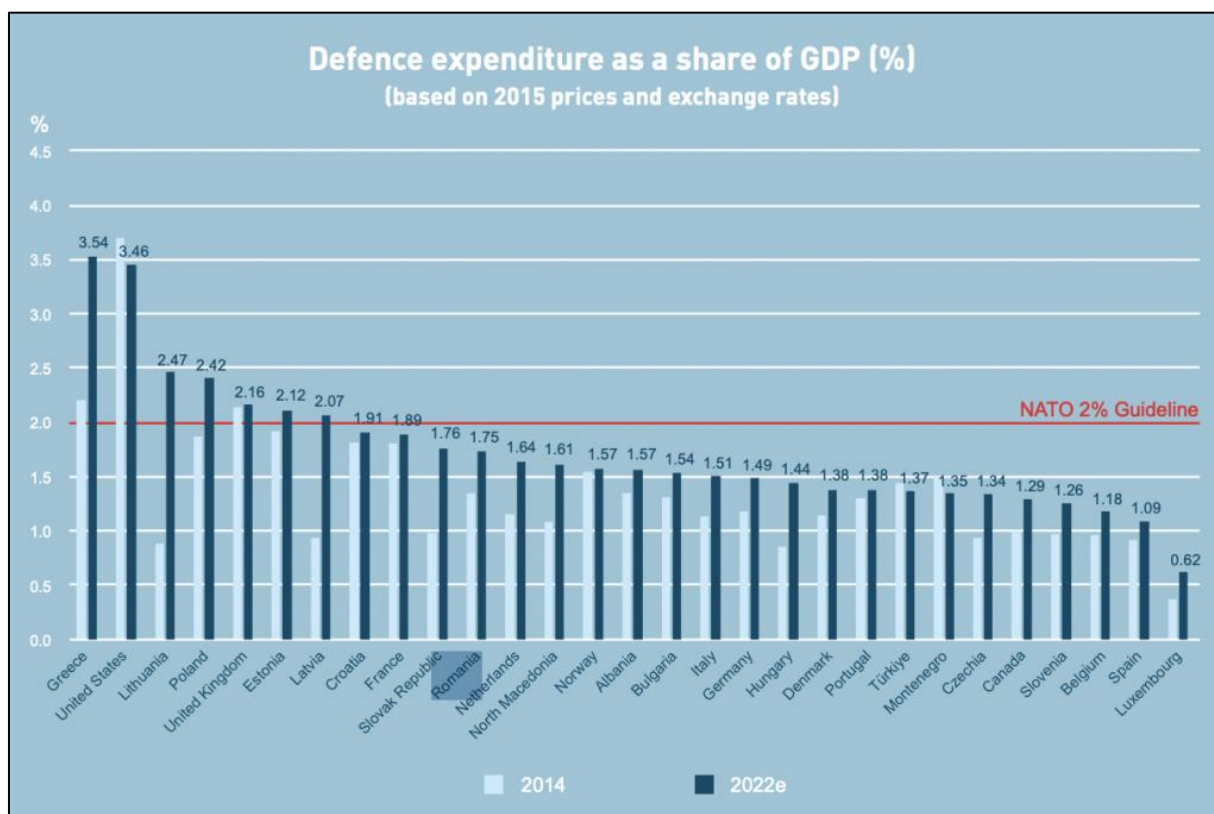


Fig. 7.2.2.3 Defense expenditure as share of GDP

Source: NATO Annual Report 2022

7.2.2.1. BUCHAREST 9: REGIONAL EUROPEAN DIALOGUE ON A GLOBAL NATO. A ROMANIAN-POLISH INITIATIVE

In order to support NATO's ongoing efforts in this regard, B9 formed as an additional platform of mutual consultation and regional cooperation, bringing together nine European countries directly involved as a consequence of their geographic position: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.

By joining such an initiative, the B9 states also attempt to frame and consolidate a common identity of the East-Central Europe, becoming a tougher advocate, a strong and united voice, as the Polish Foreign Minister, Jacek Czaputowicz, stressed at the B9 Summit in Vilnius, held on March 2020.

A precedent in joint initiatives can be traced in Central and Eastern Europe, supporting NATO's mission and activity, as the platform continues the practice of bilateral/trilateral/multilateral cooperation among several B9 countries (and Ukraine). In spring 2014, Ukraine, Lithuania and Poland created the joint Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade in Lublin. Lithuania and Poland are also NATO allies, participants in the B9 forum. The Brigade itself resulted from earlier bilateral formats (UkrPolBat and LitPolBat).²⁷

²⁷ From an idea to the creation, <https://litpolukrbrig.wp.mil.pl/en/pages/history-2019-08-21-3/>, accessed March 31, 2020.

The B9 platform was launched at the initiative of the Romanian and Polish presidents, with the aim of boosting negotiation power and providing enhanced coordination of states' political and military strategies on the Eastern flank, within the larger NATO security framework. As it subsumes NATO, the platform discusses security-related aspects, with a particular focus on the Eastern flank dimension. It does so by respecting the Alliance's principles and guidelines and does not conflict with or double other regional, European or Euro-Atlantic formats.²⁸ At the same time, official meetings held in the B9 format provide for a genuine framework to prepare NATO's official summits' agenda.

The first B9 summit took place in November 2015 in Bucharest, shortly before the 27th NATO summit in Warsaw. The Vilnius Ministerial Meeting in March 2020 accounted for the 9th official encounter in the B9 regional framework. Participant states usually organize meetings at the level of heads of state or foreign ministers. Traditionally, the former concluded with a joint declaration assessing the Eastern flank and global security situation comprehensively.

While in Košice, the B9 leaders reaffirmed support to NATO's "deterrence and defence" approach towards Russia and expressed their willingness to engage in dialogue, as convened since the Wales Summit. The aim was "to avoiding misunderstanding, miscalculation, and unintended escalation"²⁹.

The Western Balkans is a strategically important area for the Alliance and thus the respective political dialogue and cooperation will continue. Also, the B9 partners have reiterated support for Eastern countries concerning their territorial integrity and sovereignty³⁰. "While pursuing their respective European and Euro-Atlantic aspirations, these countries will continue to benefit as well from our support in their efforts to strengthen their resilience against any external interference"³¹.

Contemporary challenges include a wide range of unconventional, multifaceted threats that add to traditional warfare resources-hybrid warfare, cyber threats, terrorism, regional instability, migration, proliferation of WMD and energy security challenges. The more complex they are, the more comprehensive should the Allies' joint approach be, so they adapt strategies and respond accordingly. "No country can fully address them alone".³²

In 2019, Central and Eastern European leaders launched an appeal to a growing NATO military presence on the Eastern flank and the neighboring sea area, as well as in other areas of imperative necessity. The commitments remained steadfast throughout the previous meetings in the B9 format.

One of the most ardent topics addressed by the B9 regional group is the consolidation and valorization of the transatlantic relation. This aspect is of particular relevance for our investigation, as the current geopolitical and geo-economic trends show us that both the EU and the US felt an attracted by alternative options of cooperation with third parties, especially with China, in the last period. This came as a consequence of Washington's shift of paradigm in its foreign policy approach towards Europe, prioritizing other bilateral ties and its America First protectionist policy over any external engagement.

Equally true, in reverse order, the deeper the two's rapprochement to China, the larger the transatlantic gap in the years to come. We can actually discuss a contemporary tripolar world order, where the traditional Western Alliance is now challenged not only by Russia's ambitions but also by an expansionist Asian project, revealing new partnering prospects. Each of the two old allies keeps an open eye on the other's acceptance of Beijing's geopolitical influence.

²⁸ Valentin Naumescu, *Politica Marilor Puteri în Europa Centrală și de Est, 30 de ani de la sfârșitul Războiului Rece*, pp. 145-146.

²⁹ *Declaration of the Heads of State Bucharest 9 Meeting (Košice, 28th of February 2019)*, <https://www.presidency.ro/ro/presa/securitate-nationala-si-aparare/declaration-of-the-heads-of-state-bucharest-9-meeting-košice-28th-of-february-2019>, accessed March 30, 2020.

³⁰ *Ibidem*.

³¹ *Ibidem*.

³² *Ibidem*.

Nevertheless, the coronavirus pandemic changed the spectrum of opportunities for both Brussels and Washington, as the Chinese city of Wuhan was perceived to have generated the infection. On top of that, allegations about the “Chinese virus”, in President Donald Trump’s words seemed to have upset officials in Beijing, though he put it very clear that it is not a racist terminology, but simply denominating the place where the pandemic started. In a blame game, the US president’s claim came after several Chinese officials’ conspiracy theory that the COVID-19 illness began in the U.S. or was brought to China by the U.S. army. President Trump’s immediate response to impose travel restrictions to Europe waned again Brussels’ trust in its old transatlantic partner.

The 2017 Joint Statement (Warsaw) states that: “a solid transatlantic bond remains paramount to Euro-Atlantic security”³³. The 2019 Heads of State Declaration reads: “We have, therefore, every reason to make our Alliance stronger and to ensure that the transatlantic bond remains as solid and effective as ever”³⁴.

With the occasion of a ministerial meeting, in March 2020 Romanian Foreign Minister Bogdan Aurescu has also pleaded for the importance of the transatlantic relation and continuous efforts to ensure an equitable burden-sharing among the Allies, on the basis of the progress achieved so far.³⁵

EU-NATO cooperation represents one of the most powerful pillars on which the transatlantic relation is based, as confirmed jointly by the B9 leaders in post-summits’ official declarations (“NATO-EU cooperation remains key to our security (...) We look forward to expanding NATO-EU cooperation building on the Joint Declaration from Warsaw”³⁶, “We are determined to strengthen NATO-EU strategic partnership and cooperation”³⁷). Priority areas of EU-NATO joint action included: boosting military mobility and improving infrastructure, combating terrorism and other security threats, empowering partners in the Western Balkans and the Eastern neighborhood, developing cyber security and strategic communications³⁸.

As “stronger NATO and stronger EU are mutually reinforcing”³⁹ and “together they can better provide security and peace in Europe, in our neighborhood and beyond”⁴⁰, the B9 leaders support EU security and defense initiatives meant to strengthen the European pillar’s capacity to contribute to the Allies’ collective efforts. They should be “based on inclusiveness, non-duplication, close coordination”⁴¹, therefore in full complementarity and synergy with NATO⁴². PESCO was welcomed by CCE states, provided it develops “in the spirit of coherence, inclusiveness and transparency and thus strengthens our defence and security”⁴³ assets. Moreover, B9 committed to actively participate in PESCO projects to fill the capability gaps⁴⁴.

As their joint commitment expressed, some of the B9 countries complied with the 2% defense spending criterion. Lithuania reached this level in 2018 and it envisioned increasing appropriations to at least 2.5 percent by 2030.⁴⁵ Also the Latvian budget for 2019 has allocated 2% of GDP for military expenditure.⁴⁶ In the last months of 2019, Bulgaria managed to exceed NATO’s required percentage on defense, with more than 3% of

³³ *Joint Statement by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Bucharest 9 Format (B9)*, <https://www.mae.ro/en/node/43579>, accessed March 30, 2020.

³⁴ *Declaration of the Heads of State Bucharest 9 Meeting (Košice, 28th of February 2019)*, *loc. cit.*

³⁵ Robert Lupișu, *Formatul B9: România a pledat pentru importanța relației transatlantice la reuniunea miniștrilor de externe din țările de pe flancul estic al NATO*, <https://www.caleaeuropeana.ro/formatul-b9-romania-a-pledat-pentru-importanta-relatiei-transatlantice-la-reuniunea-ministrilor-de-externe-din-tarile-de-pe-flancul-estic-al-nato/>, accessed March 30, 2020.

³⁶ *Joint Statement by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Bucharest 9 Format (B9)*, *loc. cit.*

³⁷ *Declaration...*, *loc. cit.*

³⁸ *Joint Declaration of the Heads of State Bucharest 9 meeting (Warsaw, 8 th June 2018)*, *loc. cit.*

³⁹ *Declaration...*, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁰ *Ibidem.*

⁴¹ *Joint Declaration*, *loc. cit.*

⁴² *Declaration*, *loc. cit.*

⁴³ *Joint Statement*, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁴ *Joint Declaration*, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁵ Dalia Bankauskaitė, *Reforging National Security in the Baltics*, February 27, 2020, <https://www.cepa.org/lithuanian-total-defense>, accessed March 31, 2020.

⁴⁶ *Pabriks: by spending 2% of GDP on defence we are significantly strengthening the combat capabilities of the Latvian Army*, <https://www.mod.gov.lv/en/news/pabriks-spending-2-gdp-defence-we-are-significantly-strengthening-combat-capabilities-latvian>, accessed March 31, 2020.

its GDP, after purchasing a new fleet of F-16 fighter jets. In Tallinn, the prospects were also optimistic, as Estonians pledged in 2019 their defense budget will go beyond the 2% limit (2.14%, as estimated).⁴⁷ Romania and Poland were expected to hit the target too, as shown by 2019 estimates.⁴⁸

7.2.2.2. ROMANIA'S ADVOCACY WITHIN THE B9 PROJECT

Alongside with the acknowledged benefits stemming from its EU membership, Romania is particularly a strong advocate of the preeminence of the transatlantic relation in international affairs. Of significant importance for our analysis are the following dimensions aligning to and reinforcing the B9 general perspective, while also bringing into discussion Romania's own capabilities, deployed nationally for a broader regional cause:

- 1) enhancing NATO's deterrent posture in the Black Sea region (by air, land and sea capabilities);
- 2) the Headquarters Multinational Brigade South East in Craiova to defend NATO's Multinational Division South-East in Bucharest;
- 3) enhanced support for NATO's Eastern partners;
- 4) more attention to the Western Balkans;
- 5) NATO-EU cooperation for the stability and security of the transatlantic environment and beyond.

"Romania takes these commitments quite seriously because we're not talking about some abstract things here, we're talking about the protection of people - about giving them confidence that they're protected and safe from any danger"⁴⁹, Romanian President Klaus Iohannis remarked at the Košice Summit, as the escalations in the Black Sea region are disconcerting for the Allied community.

Experts taking part in the B9 JACU (December 17, 2019) conveyed their professional perspective on behalf of the entities represented, as well as their countries' position, with regard to actions undertaken so far within the Atlantic community to address the current complex threats.

B9 JACU focused on recommendations for concrete steps to accompany the existing ideas. Specifying "indicators of threat perception" and formulating concrete proposals in specific domains, by widely compiling all the inputs and make a comprehensive assessment of the risk factors, were suggested in the Warsaw Institute Review event. A proposal was made by the New Strategy Center in Romania for the next B9 JACU session to take place in Bucharest, as a form of a mid-term meeting among the B9 representatives.⁵⁰

Romania pleaded for increased threat resilience in Eastern and Central Europe. "Weaponised solidarity" between Romania and Poland was a popular hashtag for the conference theme, the two seen as the most important pillars of NATO's Eastern Flank, deploying military contingents and undertaking joint defence initiatives.

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine determined B9 leaders to react and come up with proposals to address the new crisis. At the Lodz summit in March 2023 - preceding the April 4-5 NATO foreign ministers' reunion and NATO summit in July 2023 - Romania asked for an enhanced engagement of the Allies in the Black Sea Region. Foreign Minister Bogdan Aurescu also encouraged B9 members to maintain their support

⁴⁷ Astghik Grigoryan, *Estonia: Government Boosts Defense Spending in 2019 Budget Bill*, <https://www.loc.gov/law/foreign-news/article/estonia-government-boosts-defense-spending-in-2019-budget-bill/>, accessed March 31, 2020.

⁴⁸ *Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2012-2019)*, https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2019_06/20190625_PR2019-069-EN.pdf, accessed March 31, 2020.

⁴⁹ *Presidents of Bucharest 9 Call for Greater NATO Military Presence in Black Sea*, February 28, 2019, <https://www.tasr.sk/tasr-clanok/TASR:20190228TBA03241>, accessed March 31, 2020.

⁵⁰ The Warsaw Institute Review, *Bucharest Nine Joint Assessment for Common Understanding: Initiation Event*, November 28, 2019, https://warsawinstitute.review/pl/events-en/bucharest-nine-joint-assessment-for-common-understanding-initiation-event/?fbclid=IwAR010zUykXQoknOxCJ-cDhhU-1G4_2iMgGova6a-DEQ6HEuNWLDbpqdQnSo, accessed May 15, 2020.

for countries neighboring Ukraine, especially for the Republic of Moldova and Georgia. He stressed the B9 duty to "restore peace, which is only attainable by supporting Ukraine to win the war."⁵¹

The energy sector represents another important field of transatlantic cooperation where Romania can exercise a particular influence, as presented in the chapter dedicated to EU-US energy relations.

The country is a point of strategic interconnectivity in the Black Sea region, capable of contributing to the transport of energy resources from the Mediterranean Sea and the Caspian Sea that could enter Romania through Greece and Bulgaria, to arrive to the rest of CEE.

Romania too had a significant role in promoting the Three Seas Initiative, hosting a Summit of the Three Seas and being one of the first investors in the initiative's investments fund, with an extremely positive role in this truly important project.

Nonetheless, the competing pipeline project Turk Stream or sometimes the uncertain environment for future investments represent a number of challenges that can, however, be addressed in a joint enterprise.

Firstly, there is a visible need to develop competitive and transparent energy markets, as natural gas remains a vital resource, to reduce global emissions and further on, in the conversion of coal into gas. Regional cooperation – like the Three Seas Initiative – can uphold the development of regional gas infrastructure.

Secondly, alternative resources in the Black Sea and the Mediterranean should be exploited, alongside with the LNG that could enter Romania.

Ambassador Richard Morningstar has pointed out that "Romania rejoices an increasingly positive image in the energy sector, as it has managed to develop interconnections with the Republic of Moldova and also to get the BRUA project on track."⁵²

Drawing the final remarks, Romania's potential to contribute to the tightening of transatlantic ties (economically, energetically and strategically-militarily) should definitely not be underestimated. Its natural and human resources, as well as its geostrategic position are considered important assets in this regard, supported, undoubtedly, by the set of democratic values it shares with both the EU and the US/NATO. The country is a joint center of attraction for both Europeans and Americans and it can act as a bridge between the two poles.

However, Romania should focus on and invest more in its own development, in order to become more self-dependent in the long run but also to be more attractive to potential foreign investors, as it manages to promote friendly policies and to create a stable and safe political and economic environment. We will develop these aspects in the next chapter, dedicated to the analysis and interpretation of quantitative and qualitative data.

⁵¹ Robert Lupițu, *Bogdan Aurescu, la reuniunea miniștrilor de externe "B9": Prima conferință la nivel înalt privind securitatea la Marea Neagră va avea loc pe 13 aprilie, la București*, March 31, 2023, <https://www.caleaeuropeana.ro/bogdan-aurescu-la-reuniunea-ministrilor-de-externe-b9-prima-conferinta-la-nivel-inalt-privind-securitatea-la-marea-neagra-va-avea-loc-pe-13-aprilie-la-bucuresti/>, accessed May 5, 2023.

⁵² R. L. Morningstar: *Rolul critic al României în cooperarea transatlantică pentru energie*, June 29, 2020, http://www.energynomics.ro/ro/rolul-critic-al-romaniei-in-cooperarea-transatlantica-pentru-energie/?fbclid=IwAR2tjLcge_RphO0zdCHfe3eYqylucrICvyrHRIOVUoa1wREE8B1Nz-uDfs8, accessed July 6, 2020.

CHAPTER 8. DATA INTERPRETATION AND RESULTS. A QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT

8.1. QUANTITATIVE INTERPRETATION

Relying on a conceptual theoretical basis covered by the previous chapters, we have resorted to an empirical research methodology using quantitative and qualitative instruments of collecting data. We are going to analyze and interpret these data, supporting the scientific theoretical basis by introducing professionals', practitioners' and the general public's opinion on the topic of the evolution of the transatlantic relation after the Cold War.

In quantitative terms, we have developed an opinion survey that was used to collect the opinion of the general public on the topic of EU-Romania-US/NATO relations. The survey was conducted online, between May 2020 and December 2022.

The target group comprised Romanian people (309 in total) from different regions/counties in the Romania, both women and men, of different ages and professional backgrounds. They have been chosen on the age criteria (minimum 17 years old), nationality (Romanian citizens living in Romania), place of residence (as to cover the most of the country's geographical territory), also on the criteria of specialization (as to include, among others, the fields of International and European Studies, Diplomacy, Defense, Economy, Energy, Negotiations, Culture and Cultural Diplomacy).

We mention here that people from other fields of activity and study have been also subject to our target group in Romania, as the intention of the survey we have developed was mainly to investigate the perception of the general public on the topic of our research, even though experts' opinions represented part of the responses we have received.

58% of the respondents are women, and the other 42% are men. 91, 1% reside in urban areas and 8, 9% come from rural regions. Most of the respondents fit in the age category 20-29 years.

The group encompassed people with a wide variety of study and professional background: International Relations and European Studies, European and International Negotiations, European Governance, Political Science, Economy, Management, Marketing, Sales, Quality Audit, Finance and Banking, Energy, Communication, Philology, Human Resources, Public Relations, Customer service (Call center), Consultancy, Print Production, Mass-media, Diplomacy, Cultural Diplomacy, Law, Public Administration, Military (defense), IT, Mathematics, History, Geography, Sociology, Psychology, Education Sciences, Library Science, Writing (Literature), Translation and Interpreting, Theology, Philosophy, Biology, Medicine, Textile industry, Engineering, Electronics, Automotive industry, Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sport, Topography, Mining, Entrepreneurship, Food industry, Music industry, Painting, Architecture.

We present below the questions in the opinion survey:

1. On a scale from 1 to 10, how important for the European continent do you consider the transatlantic cooperation (EU-USA) was after the Cold War (from 1990 until present)? 1-Not at all important 2-Extremely important
2. Thinking of the evolution of the EU-USA relation (including during the Trump Administration), which of the following shared values/principles do you feel are the most prominent? (You can choose a maximum of three options).
 - Freedom
 - Peace
 - Respect for human rights
 - Market economy
 - Democracy and the rule of law

3. In your opinion, considering everything you know/have heard/studied/read about the European Union and its current (financial, technological, military etc.) resources, it is rather: a soft power, a hard power or a soft power bearing the potential to become a hard power in the medium term?
4. How much do you think the EU's internal development has helped enhancing its relation with the US? (In other words, a stronger EU means a stronger transatlantic relation?)
- Very little
 - So-so
 - Enough
 - Very much
5. Which of the following fields of cooperation do you consider represents best the mutual interest of both sides (the EU and the US)? (Please choose only one option.)
- Economic
 - Military
 - Climate change
 - Other
6. In your opinion, how necessary is the EU-USA cooperation within NATO nowadays?
- Not very necessary
 - Necessary enough
 - Extremely necessary
7. Do you feel that, currently, NATO is acting efficiently to attain its goals (political defense cooperation, ensuring collective security of the Allies, deterring aggressors)?
- Yes, it is.
 - Yes, it is, but it can do even better.
 - No, it is not.
8. Thinking of everything you know/have heard/studied about Romania's military contribution within NATO, how much do you feel it has contributed to the collective efforts of the Alliance? (You can consider troops deployed in war zones, NATO's military capabilities on the Romanian territory, the country's contribution NATO's defense budget etc.)
- Little
 - So-so
 - Enough
 - Very much
9. Considering that Romania declares itself as both pro-European and pro-American (Atlanticist), do you feel that this makes it an important voice, capable of influencing the future of the EU-USA relation?
- Yes, I do.
 - No, I don't.
10. Which of the following American leaders do you think has been the most popular in Romania? (Please choose only one option.)
- George Herbert Walker Bush
 - Bill Clinton
 - George Walker Bush
 - Barack Obama
 - Donald Trump
 - Joe Biden.
11. Which of the following American leaders do you think has been the most popular in the EU? (Please choose only one option.)
- George Herbert Walker Bush

- Bill Clinton
- George Walker Bush
- Barack Obama
- Donald Trump
- Joe Biden.

12. In your opinion, the EU-USA relation has any prospects for the better in the future? (You can choose more than one option.)

- Yes, if the USA will have another president instead of Donald Trump.
- Yes, if there will be concessions on both sides/A new commercial agreement is signed.
- Yes, if they both avoid getting too close to other international actors (see China).
- No, this is impossible. Europeans' trust has declined, discouraged by President Trump' attitude.
- No, this is hard to achieve because disagreements outweigh the things they have in common.

Generally speaking, the majority of the Romanian respondents considered that, on a scale from 1 to 10, the importance of transatlantic cooperation equals number 10.

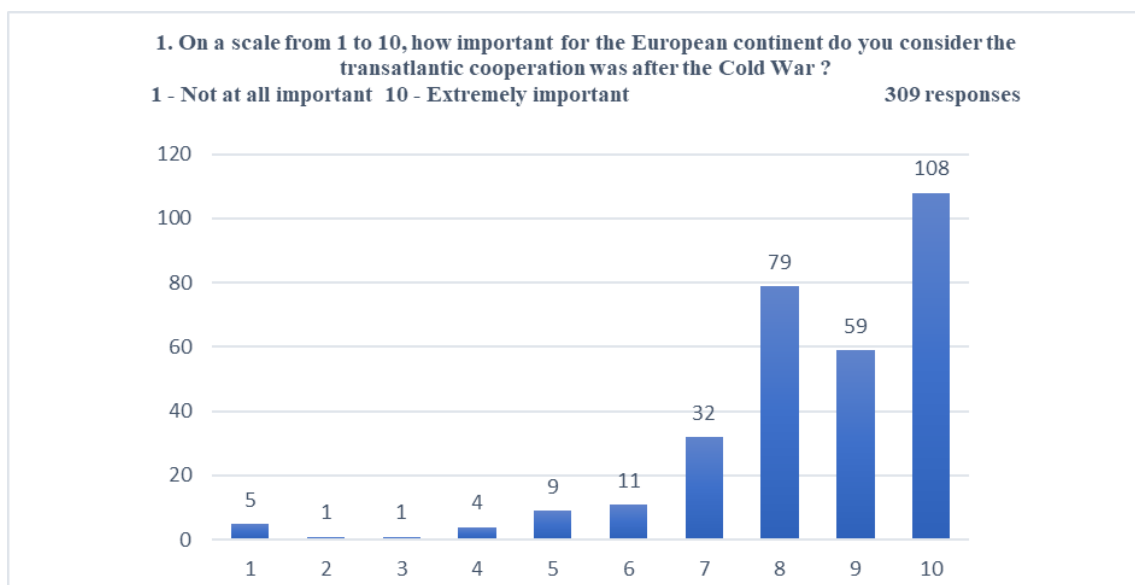


Fig. 8.1. Q1.-Opinion Survey

As part of our empirical research, we have presented a number of common Western values to our unit of observation (i.e. respondents) and the result have shown that the market economy was the most popular answer. Democracy and the rule of law was the second most preferred option, as the results of our survey have shown.

Going into detail, in Romania 68, 5% have chosen market economy, 47, 7% have opted for democracy and the rule of law, 45, 4% for peace, 37, 7% have chosen respect for human rights and only 31, 2% have chosen liberty as a value the EU and the US share.

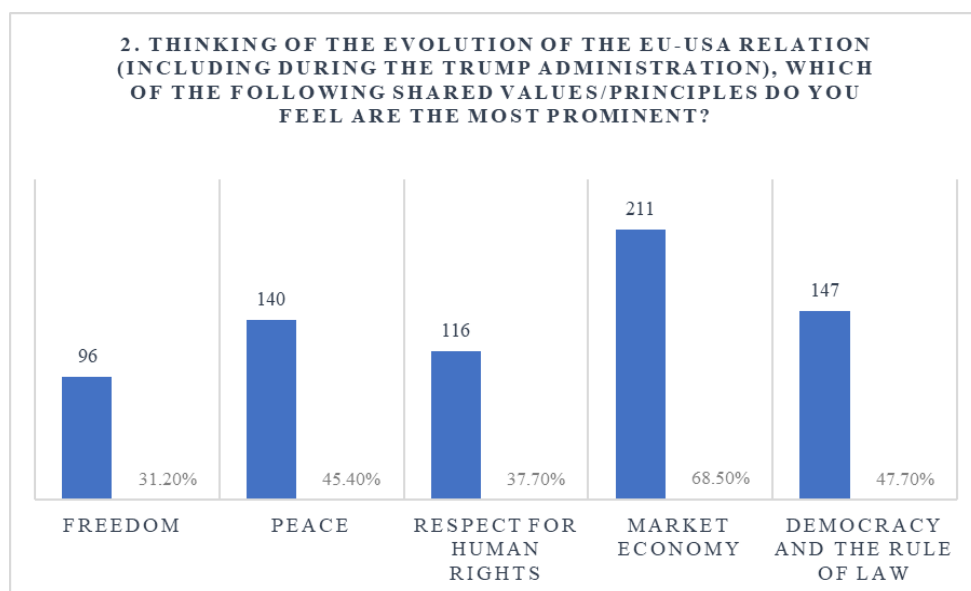


Fig.8.2. Q2-Opinion Survey

Most people consider the EU still represents a soft power, nevertheless having the potential to become a hard power in the medium future. Scores in Romania reached 45, 1%. Other 34, 4% consider the EU is a soft power bearing the potential to become a hard power in the medium term. Only 20, 4% in Romania deem the Union represents a hard power in International Relations.

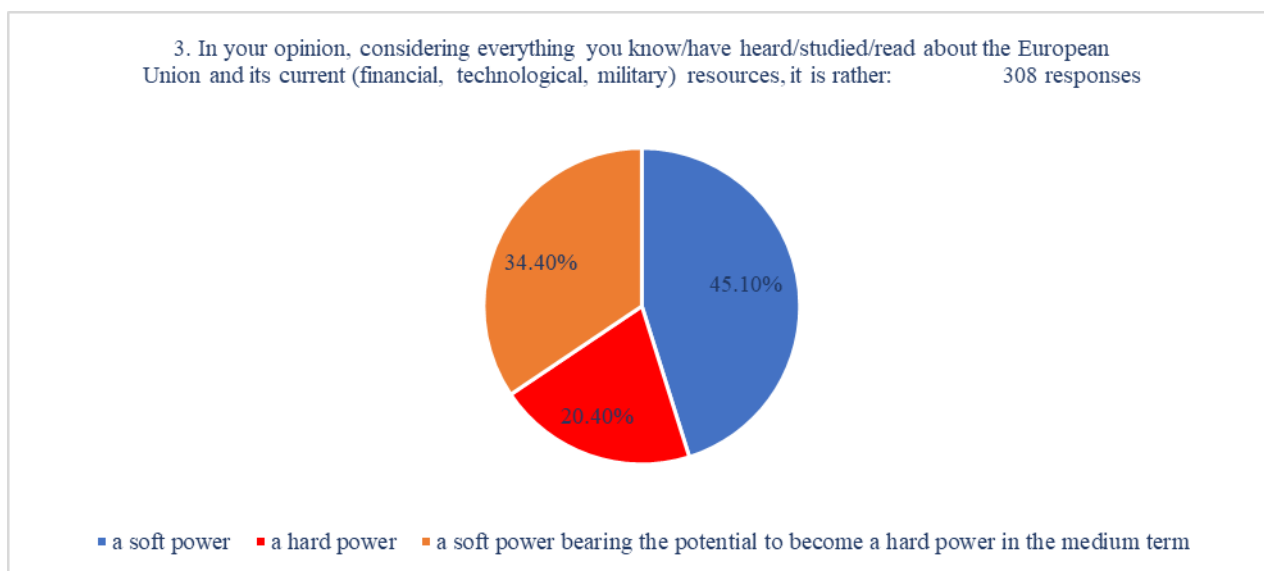


Fig. 8.3. Q3-Opinion Survey

We have asked people to offer their viewpoint on how the EU's internal development has helped enhancing its relation with the US. Scores revealed people's conviction that these efforts have contributed enough is above 40%, more precisely, 45.5%. 21% in Romania considered that EU's development has helped very much. 9.09% thought the input was very little.

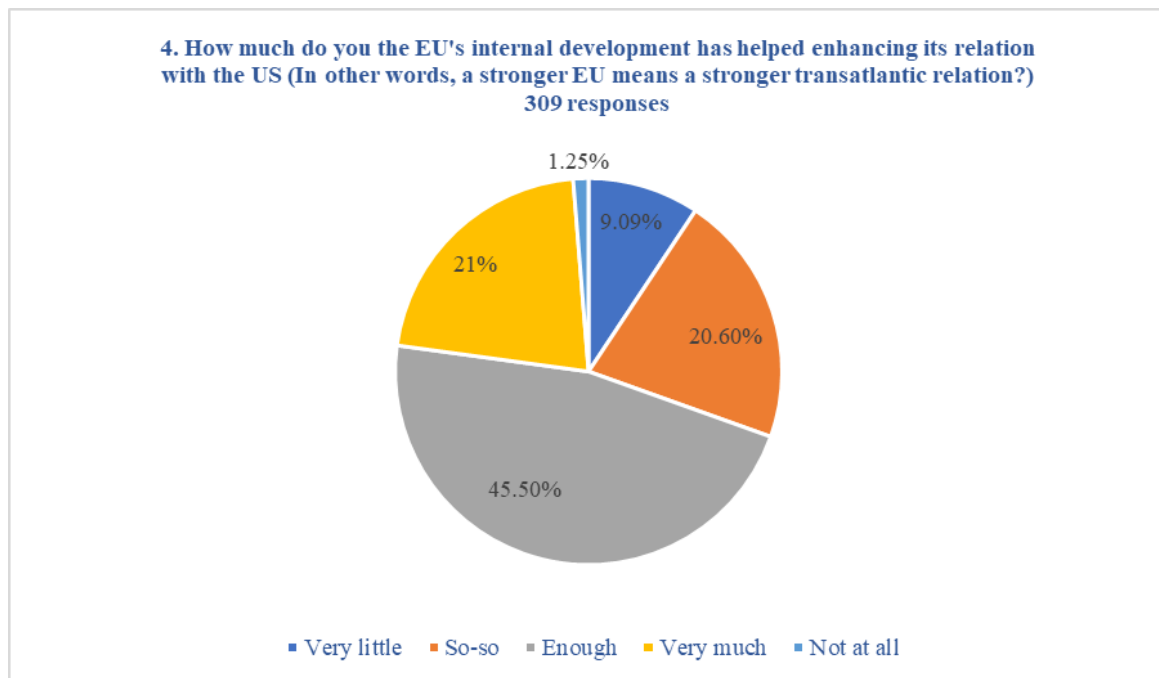


Fig.8.4. Q4-Opinion Survey

The survey we have conducted has underlined people's belief that the economic and the strategic-military fields are the two most important stakes of cooperation between the two blocks. These options were closely followed by the choice for the IT, socio-cultural, energy and climate change cooperation, other relevant realms discussed in the present research, with the exception of cooperation in technology, which we have proposed as a topic for further research. Overall, the economic field is the most preferred choice among our unit of observation.

Detailing further, Romanian people's preferences looked as follows: 46, 42%-strategic-military; 40, 59%-economic; 4, 54%-IT, 1, 95%-socio-cultural; 2, 60%-climate change; 3, 25%-energy; 0, 32%-economic (commercial) and military combined.

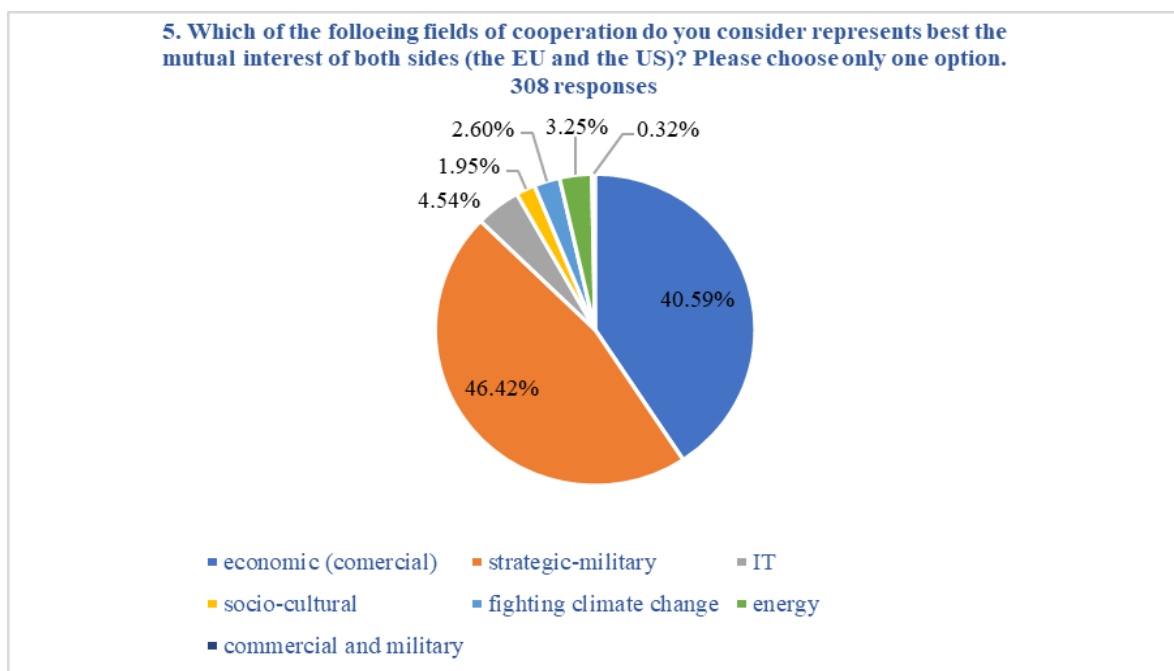


Fig.8.5..Q5-Opinion Survey

Commenting upon these two most prominent fields of cooperation revealed by the public's opinion, the 2009 Transatlantic Trends survey has shown that the majority of the people in the US considered the military intervention more important than economy, compared to Europeans' viewpoint. The 2020 TT survey report over three selected countries (France, Germany and the US) has concluded that "the French are showing war fatigue, while Germans and Americans express stronger appetite for more international engagement"¹.

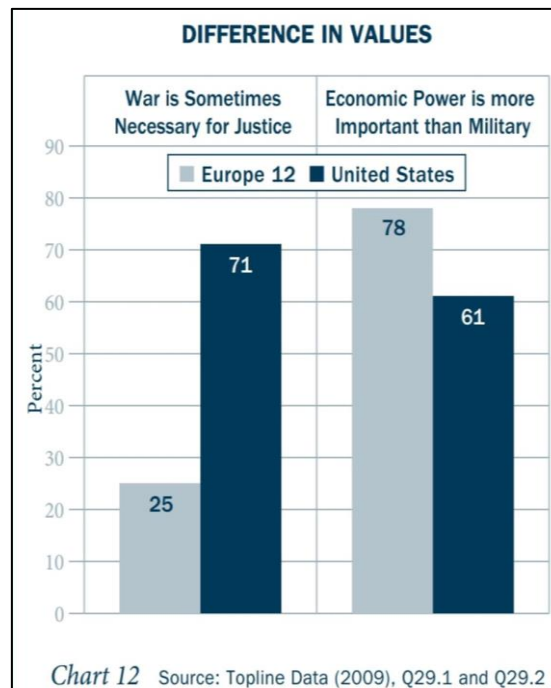


Fig. 8.6. Difference in values
Source: Topline data (2009)

The majority of respondents to our opinion survey in Romania (47, 57%) considered Europe-US cooperation within NATO is extremely necessary. 46, 28% deemed it is necessary enough. A small proportion of 6, 15% said it is not very necessary.

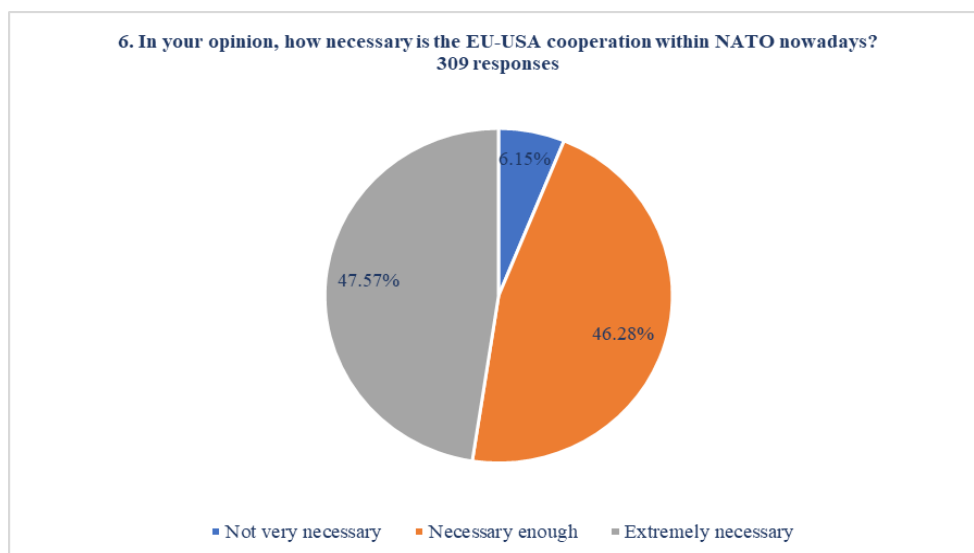


Fig.8.7. Q6-Opinion Survey

¹ The German Marshall Fund of the United States, *Transatlantic Trends* (2020), https://www.gmfus.org/sites/default/files/TT20_Final.pdf, accessed September 15, 2020.

In spite of the fact that the Franco-German nucleus has been pioneering in supporting a more enhanced European defense and security policy, the Transatlantic Trends 2020 report has underlined that most of the respondents believed that the US should somewhat involve in the defense and security of Europe. Scores reached 34% in France and Germany, and 42% in the US. A proportion of 28 in France responded the US should not be very involved, but 25% in Germany and 23% in the US thought it should be greatly involved.

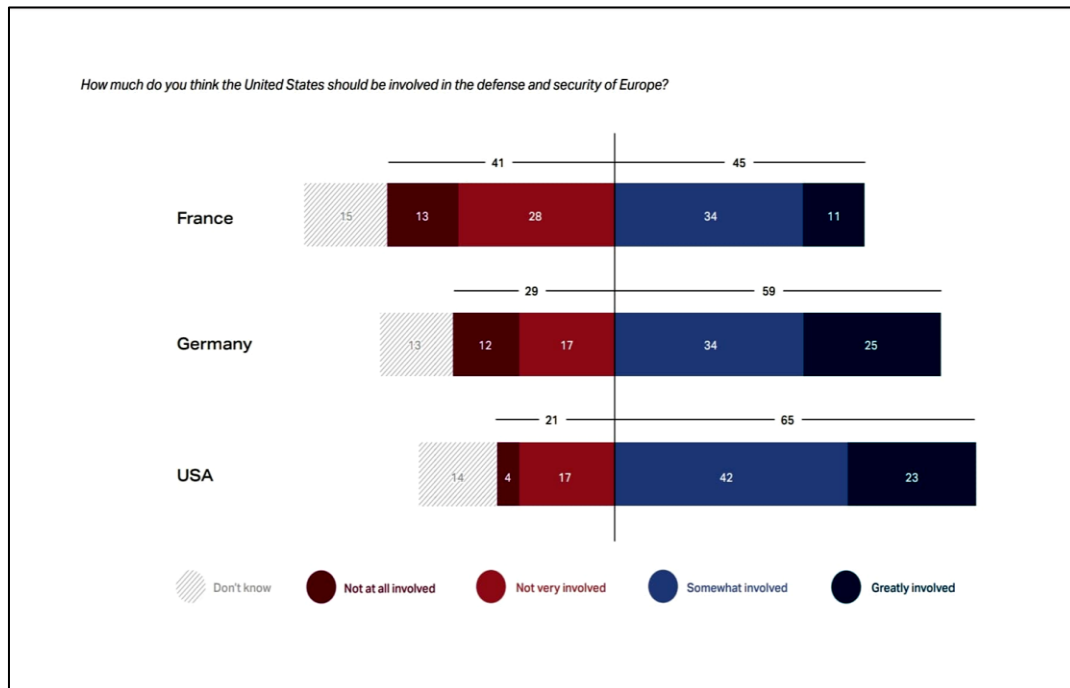


Fig.8.8. How much do you think the US should be involved in the defense and security of Europe

Source: Transatlantic Trends (2020), https://www.gmfus.org/sites/default/files/TT20_Final.pdf

Asked how efficiently do they feel NATO is acting nowadays to attain its goals, the majority of respondents (64, 4%) in Romania acknowledged that yes, it is, but it can do better. 27, 83% confirmed NATO is an efficient organization and 7, 77% deemed it is not efficient.

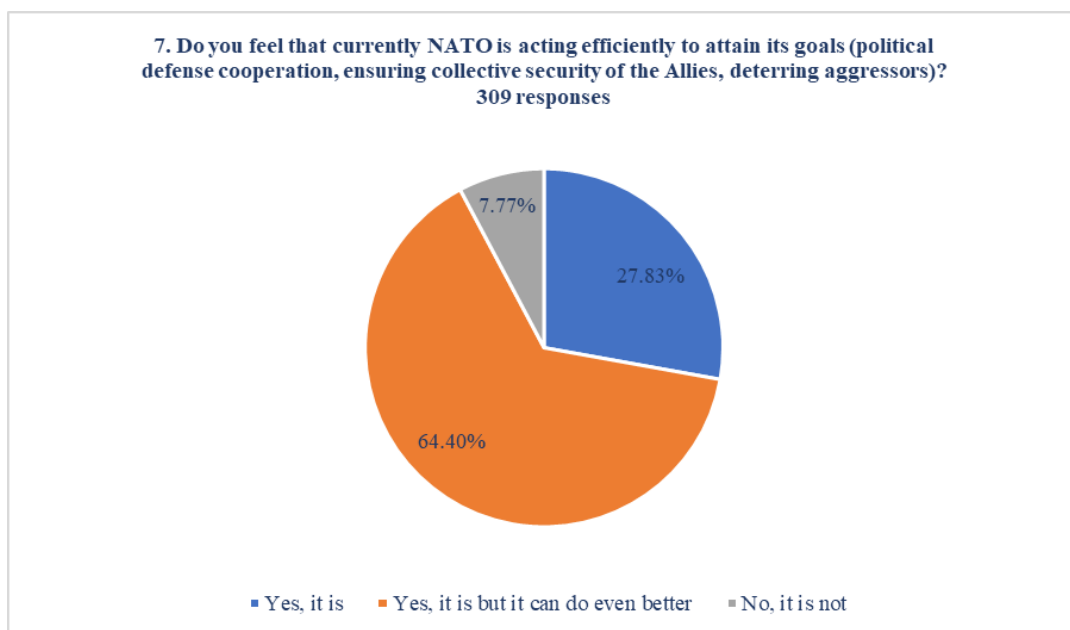


Fig.8.9.Q7-Opinion Survey

TT 2020 report presented that most of the French and German respondents felt that NATO is somehow important in the security of their respective countries, while only 27% of Americans believed that. The majority in the US instead deemed that NATO is very important in this sense.

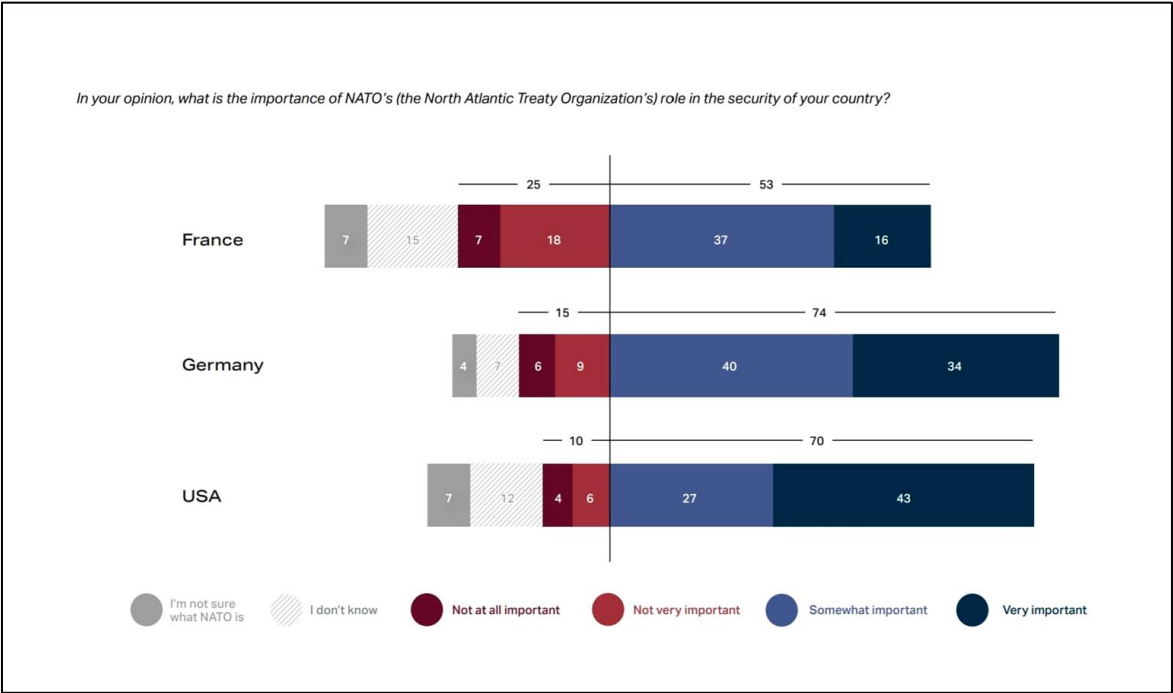


Fig.8.10. The importance of the NATO’s role in the security and defense of selected countries
Source: Transatlantic Trends (2020), https://www.gmfus.org/sites/default/files/TT20_Final.pdf

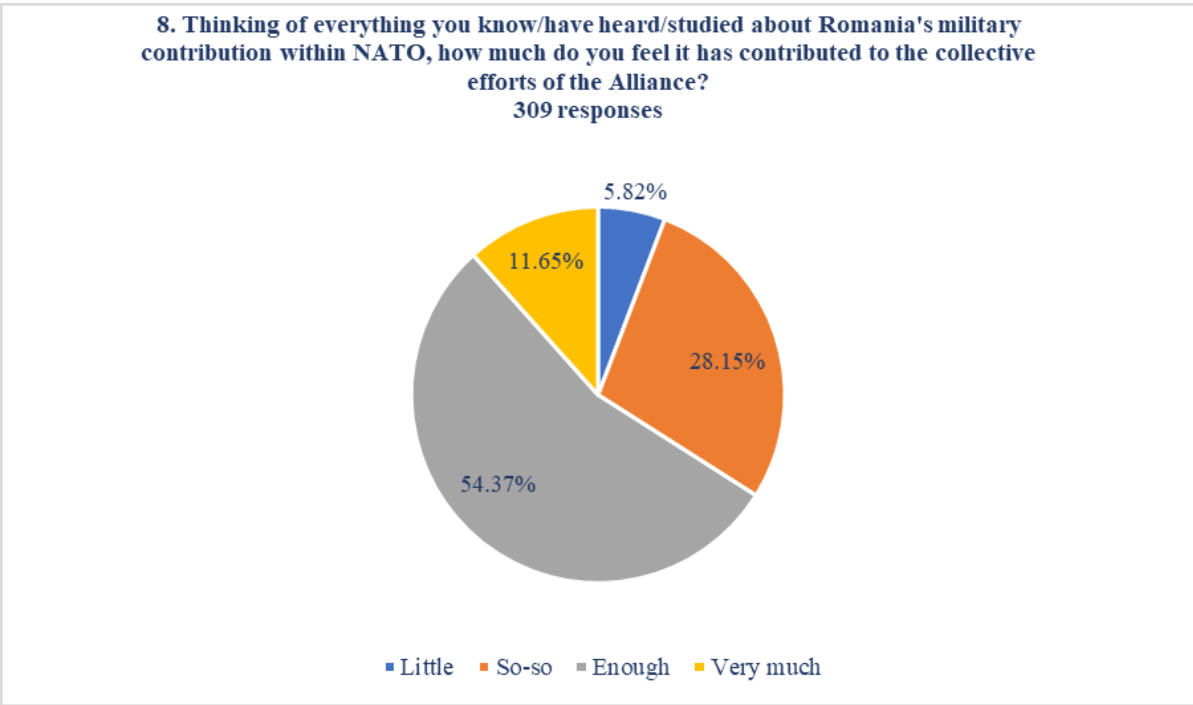


Fig.8.11. Q8-Opinion Survey

Most people conveyed that Romania has contributed enough to the Alliance’s collective efforts. Romanians have chosen this option in proportion of 54, 37%. 28, 15% said it has done so-so, 11, 65% thought Romania has contributed very much and 5, 82% considered it has done very little so far as part of its involvement in the collective efforts of the Alliance.

Asked if they consider Romania can become an important voice, capable of influencing the future of the EU-USA relation, considering it is both pro-European and pro-American (Atlanticist), 50, 98% of people responded negatively, while the other 49, 02% responded affirmatively.

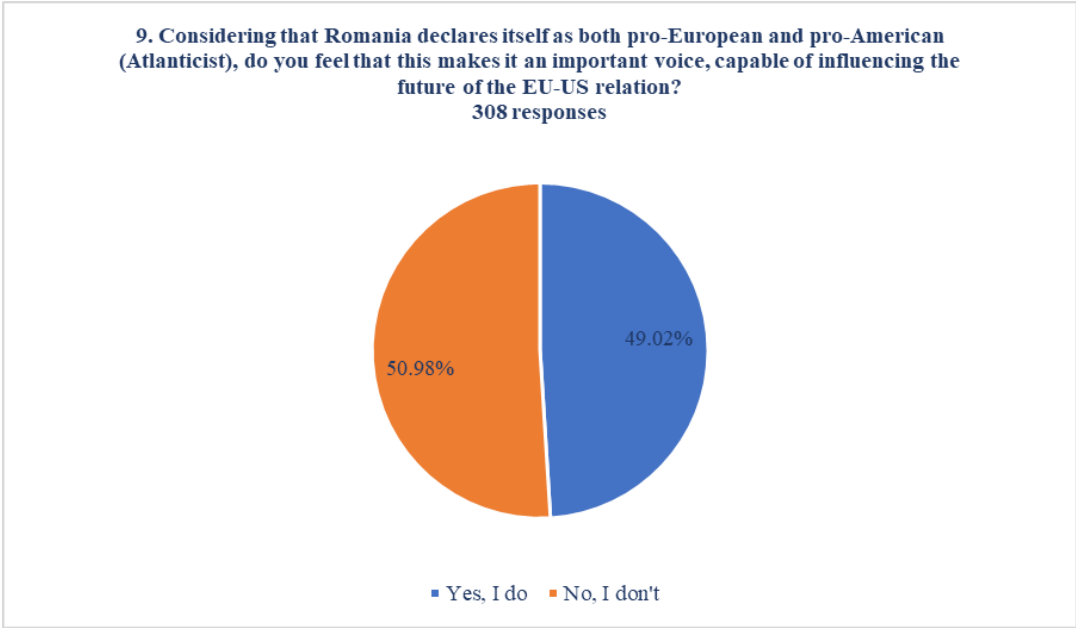


Fig.8.12. Q9-Opinion Survey

According to the results of the survey, the most popular leader in Romanian was Barack Obama (46, 43%). Other options were: 24, 02%-Bill Clinton; 19, 15%-George Walker Bush; 5, 84%-Donald Trump; 3, 90%-George Herbert Walker Bush, 0, 65%- Joe Biden.

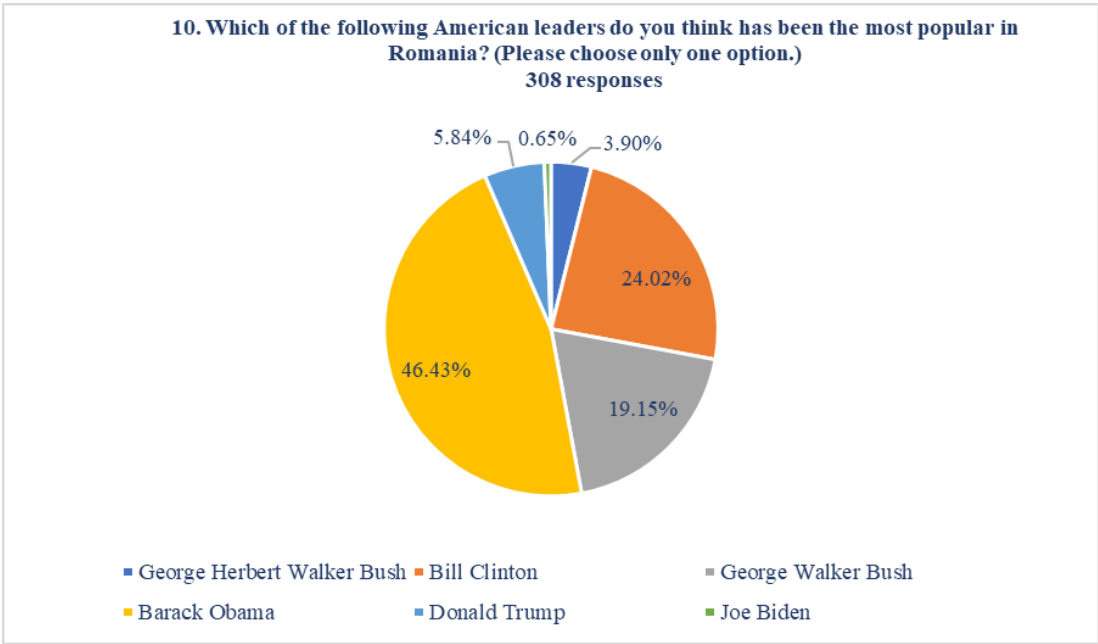


Fig.8.13. Q10-Opinion Survey

Barack Obama was the most popular leader in Europe too, according to Romanian respondents (67, 54%). Other options: 12, 13%-Bill Clinton, 11, 47%-George Walker Bush, 4,92%-George Herbert Walker Bush, 3, 61%-Donald Trump, and 0, 33%-Joe Biden. We observe that the top was almost identical as in the case of US leaders' popularity in Romania, hierarchically speaking.

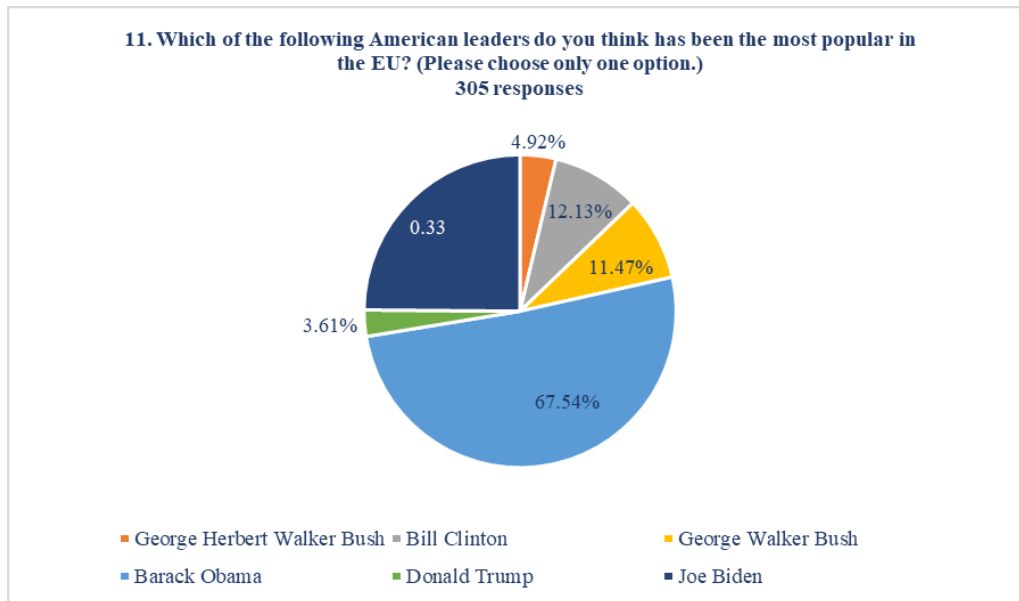


Fig.8.14. Q11-Opinion Survey

Regarding future prospects as part of the evolution of the transatlantic relation, our opinion survey has shown that the majority of Romanian respondents (54, 69%) believe that things can improve if there will be concessions on both sides/a new commercial agreement is signed.

43, 04% of Romanians considers that a new president in the White House can bring hope for a better transatlantic relation. 14, 24% in Romania have responded that the EU-US relation can be rescued if both actors avoid getting too close to other international actors (see China). Only 4, 53% of Romanians believed that this is actually impossible, as Europeans' trust has declined, discouraged by President Trump's attitude. Instead, 7, 12% people in Romania answered that transatlantic rebounding is an objective hard to be achieved because disagreements outweigh the things the EU and the US do have in common.

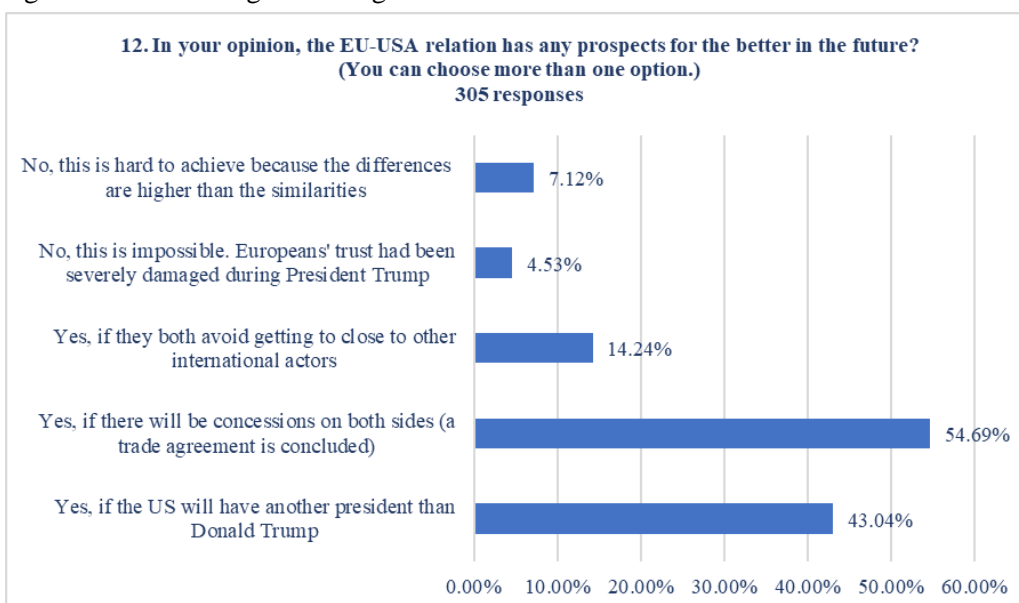


Fig.8.15. Q12-Opinion Survey

Transatlantic Trends 2020 reported that significant proportions in French, German and American respondents somehow supported a transatlantic trade agreement and another important percentage was strongly in favor of it. This was similar to the results in our opinion survey, if we consider respondents choosing a trade deal as the best opportunity to refresh transatlantic relations.

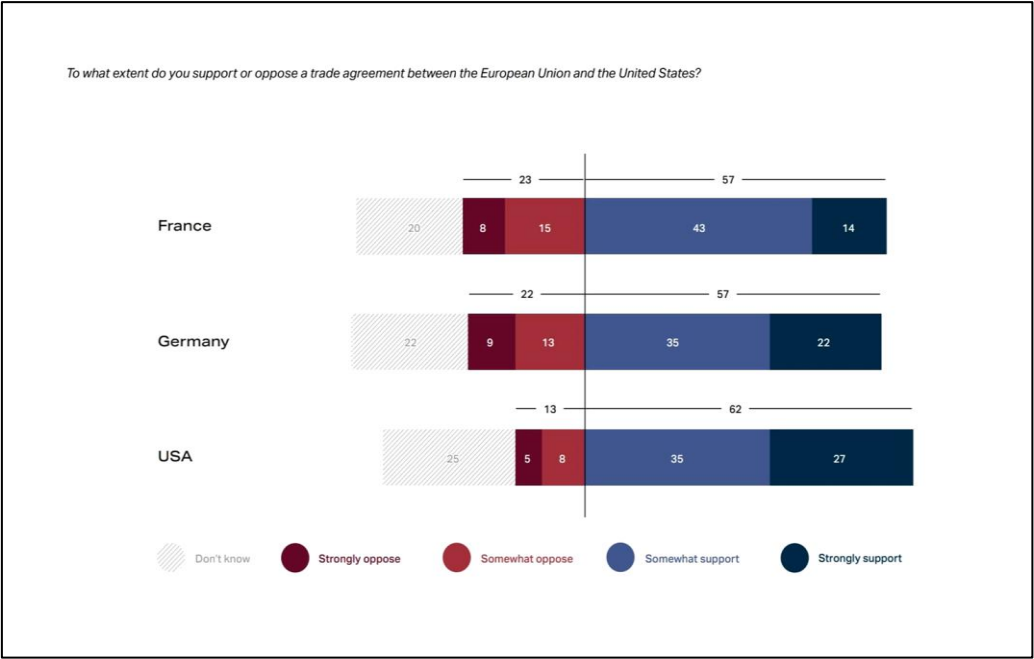


Fig.8. 16..People’s support/opposition towards a EU-US trade agreement (selected countries)
Source: Transatlantic Trends (2020), https://www.gmfus.org/sites/default/files/TT20_Final.pdf

Most Germans and Americans considered back in 2020 that the transatlantic economic relation was equally balanced, whereas the majority of French deemed it is rather somewhat favorable to the US, according to the same TT 2020 report.

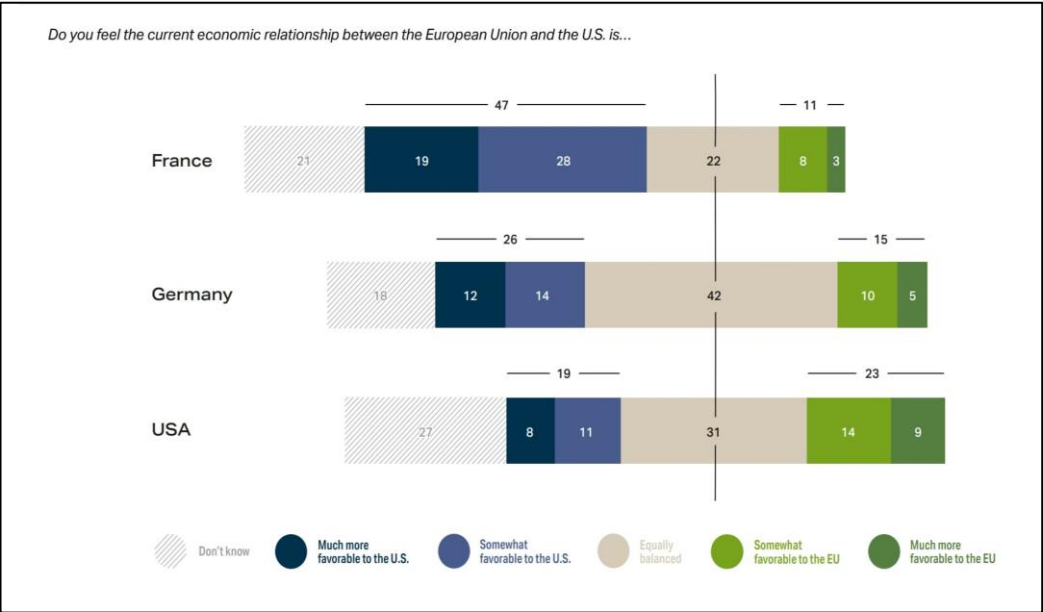


Fig.8.17. The current economic relationship between the EU and the US
Source: Transatlantic Trends (2020), https://www.gmfus.org/sites/default/files/TT20_Final.pdf

8.2. QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

In this part we are going to provide a qualitative interpretation of the results from the opinion survey we have conducted, as well as for the interviews we were granted. We begin by analyzing each of the questions in the opinion survey, correlating the results with findings in the theoretical part of our research, to underline the degree to which our hypotheses have been confirmed (validated).

Q1. As the present research has used the market concept to underline a number of initiatives of cooperation between the EU and the US (i.e. trade in commercial, energy or cultural goods), the quantitative means of investigation has underlined the core importance of the market forces in transatlantic relations, since the economy (sided by the military) was seen the most influential driver for cooperation and the market economy was the leading principle in the majority of cases, as we will present further on in this chapter.

Q2. In our theoretical support we have identified a number of key values around which the transatlantic partnership has been built and that have constituted the driving force behind various joint initiatives. The quantitative methodology has validated the theoretical findings according to which the transatlantic economic relation developed as more and more integrated and that the two blocks are the most important trading partners for each other, even though prospects for the future might look more pessimistic in this regard.

Q3. We believe the EU's developing into a hard power in the medium term accounts for quite an ambitious goal, though the EU leadership in Brussels has been trying - especially in the last period - to encourage the enhancement of the EU's military capabilities, and the PESCO initiative was significant in this regard, reuniting under its framework most of the EU countries.

Q4. Interpreting a series of political discourses by EU leaders, we have understood how important the Union's internal development was considered for itself to assert as a global power and also to strengthen the European pillar within the transatlantic alliance. Scores in Romania revealed people's conviction that these efforts have contributed enough, which confirms our theoretical hypothesis on this topic.

Q5. We have concluded that the transatlantic trade market bears an enormous potential that must not be overlooked in the future and that also joint military involvement from the EU and the US is needed to address common global security challenges. The survey we have conducted has underlined people's belief that the economic and the strategic-military fields are the two most important stakes of cooperation between the two blocks.

Q6. In the first part of our research we have emphasized the idea of NATO's continuous relevance nowadays, in spite of the dissolution of the former USSR and because of the new forms of threat (including hybrid, cyber threats) that are posing a challenge to global security. Moreover, NATO is not only a military, but also a political organization and, very important, it is a defensive Alliance. The majority of the people surveyed believed that EU-US cooperation under the NATO umbrella is necessary enough nowadays.

Also, a large percentage of Romanians deemed cooperation in the framework of NATO is extremely necessary, we make here a correlation with the fact that Romanians usually look for NATO to guarantee their security needs rather than EU institutions/mechanisms (see Fig. 7.1.2.4. Institutions safeguarding Romania's national security; Source: INSCOP Research).

Q7. The majority of our respondents to the opinion survey have affirmed that NATO is acting efficiently to attain its political and military objectives but it can do better. As our theoretical investigation has shown, a reform of NATO has been discussed in political circles too, as a need to adapt to current, proliferating hybrid security threats. This aspect has been also underlined by one of our interviewees that we will introduce further on in this chapter.

Q8. In our case study, we aimed to demonstrate that Romania has had a significant contribution to NATO and that it is an important actor for the Western Alliance, through its geostrategic position and human and natural resources. Results of the opinion survey we have conducted confirmed this hypothesis, as most of the

respondents we have focused on have confirmed that Romania has contributed enough to NATO's collective efforts.

Q9. The case study focusing on Romania's role and potential within the EU-US relation took us to estimate that the country can contribute to a certain extent to consolidate this relation, by the input it can bring to specific sectors of common interest such as the military or the energy fields. Responses on the question of Romania's pro-European and pro-American attitude and its power of influence found that the general public's opinion is split between affirmative and negative, in some cases with very tight scores, as displayed in the figures above. This somehow represents an impediment for us to conclude on a definitive stance regarding Romania's capacity to influence transatlantic relations (for the better).

Q10+11. Regarding people's option for the most popular US leader in Romania and Europe, the majority of the answers in the three target groups favored President Barack Obama. In the theoretical part, we have underlined the fact that transatlantic relations in the Obama era have experienced a visible revival, despite the economic and financial crisis that has reached a global dimension in that period, and thus, our hypothesis had been confirmed and emphasized by the results of the opinion survey.

Q12. Overall, we can argue there is optimism among the wider public regarding the consolidation of transatlantic relations in the future, taking into consideration the dimensions mentioned in the present survey, which are primarily opinions that the scientific and political community agrees upon.

The fact that our hypotheses have been confirmed was also supported by the result in the One-Sample Test, conducted through the SPSS program. For example, Q1 is correlated with Q6. This means that people having offered a higher score to the significance of the overall EU-US relation after 1989 were much more inclined to respond in Q6 that European-American cooperation within the NATO umbrella is necessary enough or even extremely necessary.

Another example is related to Q7 having been correlated with Q9. This refers to the extent to which people considered NATO is acting efficiently nowadays to attain its goals and the extent to which they believed Romania can contribute to influence transatlantic cooperation.

Q10 and Q11 were analyzed by the SPSS program as being correlated. This precisely refers to the respondents' preference for a particular US leader as being the most popular in Romania and Europe, respectively, answers to one question possibly influencing responses to the other one.

As we have mentioned at the beginning of this subchapter, another significant contribution to the qualitative methodology was represented by the interviews we have conducted from May to August 2020 and in December 2022, both by telephone and online (in written form). For an in-depth analysis, we have talked to a number of representative professionals in various fields related to our research topic, such as diplomacy (including cultural diplomacy), economy (trade), energy, military and defense, education and culture (including language).

We were honored to receive a favorable response to our interviewing request by the Romanian Permanent Representative to the UN, who took the opportunity to stress the crucial importance of multilateralism (as promoted by the UN) and the multilateralist approach perpetuated by the EU and NATO. He acknowledged that Romania in particular has a long-term commitment to multilateralism, an efficient means to preserve global peace.

The transatlantic relation remains fundamental to Euro-Atlantic security. In a system of global interactions, Romania can successfully promote its internal (political, economic and security) agenda, if it acts accordingly with the multilateralist matrix of the EU and NATO, the two anchors of its bilateral vocation.

As part of an extended research, we have conducted an interview with the President of the Romanian-American Business Council (RABC), a center bearing expertise in conducting business with Romania and the US, providing professional consultancy for businesses and the community, in their quest for the right advocacy tools to access a number of specific services. RABC has two offices: one in New York and one in Bucharest.

We have also talked to a senior researcher in the fields of international relations, national and international security, NATO and EU, and studies on totalitarian regimes. He has worked in various senior positions within the Romanian Ministry of Defense, including that of the General Director for Defense and Planning Policy, responsible for NATO and EU policies. He had also served as Chief of the Defense Section of the Romanian Permanent Delegation at NATO Headquarters in Brussels.

On the issue of Romania's contribution to transatlantic energy cooperation we have discussed with the Director of the Department for Strategy and Corporate Management at Transgaz.

In an interview with a Fulbright Junior student (a beneficiary between 2004 and 2006), bearing an academic background in museum and cultural studies, as well as with a beneficiary of a Fulbright Junior Visiting Researcher scholarship in Boston, as part of her Ph.D. studies, we have had our theoretical findings about the power of cultural diplomacy confirmed and we have also discovered new dimensions regarding Europeans and Americans perspectives on culture and approaches to it, as well as to the higher education system.

The interview granted by the vice-president of the Euro-Atlantic Resilience Centre in Bucharest has provided us valuable data for the scenarios regarding the future of transatlantic relations.

Considering the means to influence the decision-making process at various society levels, to achieve the economic and overall progress in Romania, the RABC was created in order to complement the efforts of other similar entities by engaging in a direct dialogue with decision-making executives, with legislators, with political leaders, and by bridging the gap, as Romania needs better representation in its strategic partnership with the US, it needs lobbying forms and private trading entities.

We understood that both national and foreign investments are necessary, and that the US should be within the three top investors on the Romanian market in terms of investment, trade and development. The Romanian government and all the other stakeholders, grasping the recent economic trends, should work together in order to ensure the best national policies to make investors aware of the country's potential and opportunities and to offer them incentives to invest. Bureaucracy, political fragmentation, corruption and sometimes unwise allocation of resources must be properly addressed in this regard. The American company Chevron leaving from the Black Sea was a classic example of how not to keep an investor on board.

The additional means of qualitative research has enabled us to underline again - as in the case study chapter - the progress that Romania made towards a democratic country and promoting a market economy after its integration in the Euro-Atlantic structures, and after intensifying its bilateral economic relations with the US from the 1990s onwards. As a consequence of the EU integration and Romania's NATO membership, and of the strategic role the country plays in the region, things have changed and improved, although the process is still ongoing, at societal, economic or cultural levels. The negative population growth, the continuous exodus or gaps in the agriculture and infrastructure policies were among the examples of underperformance that we received about Romania.

The quantitative research has helped us estimate the credit that people offer to the Western values, understood as a common legacy between Europeans and Americans. In addition, part of them can be found in Romania's relation with the US too, according to our qualitative data assessment. The spiritual values (much more prominent in the US society than in Europe) were highlighted. Thus, Romanians and Americans both cherish freedom, independence, and sovereignty. They are two friendly nations, they are both nations that love peace, God, regardless of religion or who they precisely worship, they are generous by nature and want to better themselves.

As the two have so much in common, our interviewee cautioned that they have to be careful not to leave Romania behind in the desire of growing together.

Romania is first of all an EU member and also a NATO member and a very good and close friend of the US. Discussing the issue of whether Romania can actually influence the overall EU-US relation, more emphasis should be also put on what Romania gets from its relation with these two major actors.

The theoretical documentation determines us to conclude that Romania has more to gain from its EU membership (in terms of economic and social integration) and that the US remain a stronger partner especially in the field of defense. Also, our interview with the Romanian Permanent Representative to the UN has revealed that Romania's own success and its positioning within the multilateralist matrix of supranational organizations are interdependent factors.

On a different note, qualitative data from our interview has emphasized that we can get more of our relation with the US than we do get right now with Europe, generally speaking. Romania needs to be very careful in terms of what we get for this membership to the EU. The sovereignty shared with Brussels was presented as an example of how we're being taken advantage of, as a nation, on the basis of the idea that we are being told what to grow and manufacture and how. Moreover, Romania must develop a more independent mindset than just relying on other countries and other nations.

Transatlantic cooperation in the energy sector rejoices Romania's openness and support, as both the EU and the US represent highly important and powerful pillars in ensuring energy security and solidarity, in developing efficiently the natural gas transmission infrastructure in particular, and the energy infrastructure in general.

On a particular topic, asked how important he considers Romania as an economic player on the Euro-Atlantic energy market, the President of RABC evoked the country's strategic location and position, which has been for the last 20 plus years at the crossroads of East, West, North and South, Middle East, and Asia. Romania has great advantages, it is a European player in terms of pipeline, oil, gas but these also come with risks and with exposure. Romania borders Ukraine - which is under tremendous pressure from its neighbor-, it borders Russia on the Black Sea, which is very unhappy with Romania's strategic Alliance with the US.

In an interview with the Director of the Department for Strategy and Corporate Management at Transgaz, on the issue of Romania's contribution to the transatlantic energy cooperation –and the BRUA project- we understood that the US company Solar Turbine had won the auction opened for the selection of the entity in charge of constructing the BRUA pipeline compressor groups within the compressor stations on the Romanian territory. Reputation at global level in the construction industry specialized in compressor groups and the quality-price assessment reported to the Romanian market potential were the main indicators of the successful application of Solar Turbine.

The American partners have also supported financially the modernization of the compressor station in Șinca Nouă, Brașov County, a station which is of utmost importance within the Romanian gas transmission system. Again, Solar Turbine has been considered as the most suitable company to work with for this project. While we must comply with the EU legislation in the energy field, the Americans proved willing to take part in financing projects of strategic importance for both Europe and Romania.

Another example of EU/Romania-US collaboration in the field of energy was represented by the MoU for Developing the Natural Gas Networks in Eastern Europe (EE-NGP), signed on January 28, 2020 between ALBGAS. Sh.a. (Albania), BH-GAS D.O.O. (Bosnia & Herzegovina), BULGARTRANGAZ EAD (Bulgaria), PLINACRO D.O.O.(Croatia) DESFA S.A. (Greece), Ministry for Economic Development from Kosovo, GA-MĂ AD - SKOPJE (North Macedonia), MONTENEGRO BONUS (Montenegro), GAZ-SYSTEM S.A. (Poland), SNTGN TRNGAZ SA (Romania), EUSTREAM (Slovakia) and the US Energy Association (USEA). This partnership pioneered in addressing the concept of a joint modeling of European gas networks.

Transgaz is currently interested in researching on the potential of injecting a 2% of renewable sources, low-carbon emission hydrogen into the National Transmission System (NTS), in order to align to the specific European Directives to date.

Approaching the particular topic of Romania's military contribution, from his practical experience in the Romanian Ministry of Defense, the senior researcher has told us that Romania can offer many contributions to security and defense. In the last 30 years, Romania has contributed to classic peacekeeping missions,

humanitarian assistance, surveillance missions, support missions for the civilian population or international organizations, medical assistance, missions for international coalitions, and military police missions. Romania can offer air transport capabilities, specialized teams for cyber security, demining teams, teams for psychological operations. It can provide training, mentoring and education for diplomatic, military, public order and security personnel.

Analyzing responses in the interview, its natural and human resources along with its geostrategic position make Romania an important regional actor. Considering its military involvement so far, the fact that Romania is both pro-European and pro-American and that it has a strategic partnership with the US, in the future, the country's role as a contributor to NATO-EU complementarity should increase. Romania could be a similar example with Germany, the Netherlands, and Belgium for a balanced position in the transatlantic relationship but for our region.

Statistically speaking, we have seen that the EU's internal development has contributed enough to enhance its relation with the US. On a particular case, pondering the extent to which the EU's efforts to create and consolidate an ESDI (later transformed into the EU's CFSP) within NATO have contributed effectively to the Alliance's resilience and performance after the Cold War, qualitative data showed that this European identity did not have a prominent profile and has contributed to a small extent to NATO's resilience and performance.

From a conceptual viewpoint, between the European and the transatlantic dimension there were and still are major areas of ambiguity and divergence. The American military superiority has defined NATO's adaptation in the post-Cold War period.

Theoretical basis supported the idea that, in spite of repeated reassurances from both the EU and the US that there is no intention to duplicate the other's competences, concerns on this matter still exist. This aspect was confirmed during the interview. As the EU, politically speaking, is seeking to achieve strategic autonomy for European security and defense decisions, there might be decisions in the EU that are not agreed with the US partner and this could lead to reciprocal measures to block decisions in NATO on European security issues. From a military point of view, European decisions on certain missions could compete with NATO ones on the same type of mission. For example, it was the case of missions in the Mediterranean Sea, on the Eastern flank or in the Black Sea region.

Concerning the defense industry, in NATO, the American industry was supported and provided many programs for the European Allies. If the EU decides to develop military endowment programs and persuade European allies to give up American products, this will be problematic as NATO programs could be blocked by some European countries. The EU struggle for its own military command and control system, alongside with a military planning process parallel to that of NATO, and the new types of capabilities generated according to EU requirements might give birth to two complementary systems, quite expensive though, while EU and NATO member countries have a single national budget allocated for defense and a single army.

The most preferred option among participants to our opinion survey, that NATO can do better to improve its efficiency in attain political and military defensive goals, was reinforced by the qualitative results. Discussing the need for NATO's internal reform, our interviewee believed that, in order for NATO to maintain its relevance and popularity, it must invest in the "credibility of defense". Also, maintaining the overall transatlantic relationship at a good level would be required.

Prioritizing the insurance of homogeneous territorial defense throughout the territory of the Alliance and the extension of the mechanisms for stability and cooperative security on the Eastern and Southern flanks constitute other areas where improvements can be made. Very important, from a military point of view, to be able to provide solutions to newly emerging types of threats, NATO should rely on an adequate concept of deterrence.

Even though misconceptions/stereotypes about Europeans and Americans will continue to exist, largely speaking, people going to study abroad can definitely be the exception to the rule. Therefore, study

mobilities are seen as a good opportunity to learn more about each other's values and to influence/adjust people's initial perception (framing) about a different country and society. They can help building bridges across cultures in the EU and the US. Our interviewees saw them as mandatory within future transatlantic relations and conveyed that more exchange opportunities between the two sides, including through extending the Erasmus study as well other particular programmes, would be highly welcomed.

The model of (American) pluridisciplinary universities was considered much more beneficial in the case of related fields of study (i.e. museum studies-visual arts-cultural studies-music), as academic interactions could have been enabled more easily whenever the case. Also, informal networking was more powerful.

The American education model is much more competitive. It involves a high degree of energy and multi-tasking, which is not always easy.

As cultural differences between Europeans and Americans we have identified that people in the US are much more inclined to create the "community spirit" when interacting with foreigners (the "exotic element") than people in Europe normally do. This is also a sign of pragmatism; this strategy can be in their interest too. It looks like the "melting pot" recipe has succeeded better in the US, while in Europe East-West discrepancies are still visible nowadays.

The concept of "popular culture" or "pop culture" (i.e. mainstream ideas in the wider public's belief defining an unofficial mass culture, highly appealing and largely accessible) is different in the EU and the US. If Europeans dedicate a special attention to tradition and attribute more value to the past, in America there is "the art of the present" which is considered to be more important. They have different landmarks, other types of idols and access to culture in general can be less pretentious than in Europe (Although we can find regions in the US that are disfavored, based on geographical or ethnical arguments).

Local and marginal forms of art were described as a very interesting and positive experience. Culture in European countries nevertheless has its finesse, it is qualitatively distinct and it can address to many categories through its institutionalized programs and inclusive projects developed for communities.

Educational and cultural programs – as a soft power tool – can contribute to the strengthening of EU-US bilateral ties in general, that is to influence cooperation in other fields of interest too. The Fulbright Programme is a living proof in this regard. In a sense, educational exchanges are becoming from a tool of "soft power", a tool of "smart power", as they go beyond the traditional approach.

We have had opportunity to interview the Director of the German Cultural Centre in Cluj-Napoca – currently the only Goethe-Zentrum in Romania (a title reserved for especially close local partners of Germany's Goethe-Institut) and one of Cluj-Napoca's most visible foreign cultural centers, as it received a lot of recognition from partners and the broader public. The main mission of the Goethe-Zentrum is to strengthen the cultural relations between the city of Cluj-Napoca and the Federal Republic of Germany through a cultural dialogue (as opposed to one-way propaganda). All the events served this cultural exchange in one way or another.

Just like the Fulbright researcher we have discussed with, the representative of the German Cultural Center stressed the importance of modern German arts and culture, as the aim of the institutions was to portray a contemporary, modern, and urban image of German culture and not promote regional or folkloristic aspects that were irrelevant to their target audience (young, motivated adults in their twenties and early thirties) like Southern German beer festivals and the likes.

One area that was of particular focus for the Goethe Zentrum in Cluj-Napoca was represented by the communication of democratic values that are cornerstones of both Germany and the EU (such as the perception of women in society and equal rights for the specific categories of minorities). Providing opportunities for real exchange, usually by inviting guests from Germany, was seen as a means to counter the tendency for simplifications and stereotypes that people normally resort to.

By interacting with local people both sides replace stereotypes with a growing understanding of one another. We understood that cultural exchange is an ongoing process that is never really finished – partly also because culture in itself is not static but a subject to constant evolution.

With the German language teacher from Goethe Zentrum in Cluj-Napoca we have discussed the same topic of the impact and range of information about German culture (and, implicitly, about European culture). The interest for the German culture and language (both teaching and learning) in the US is not that high – actually it is rather decreasing – compared to Eastern and Central European states. An assumption was that linguistic policy in the US (learning a foreign language after the age of 16) might be one of the reasons for that.

The Director of Goethe Zentrum and the German teacher have both confirmed the enormously important role of cultural diplomacy in international relations, its potential to influence cooperation in other realms, too. The aim of foreign cultural policy (denominating here in particular one of the three pillars of the German foreign policy alongside with foreign security policy and foreign economic policy), is to create mutual understanding. This understanding was meant both literally (in terms of language) and figuratively (understanding each other's values, mentality, and way of thinking). Understanding can lead to trust – and trust is the basis for successful cooperation in security and business matters.

The German perspective was that Europeans and Americans have far more in common than what separates them – an aspect that was evoked for Western European countries, from where a large part of immigrants went to the US in the 19th century. Shared cultural traits included – “among many other things” – an individual-centered world view as opposed to a community-based one. It was interesting to see that the “community spirit” was brought again into discussion, this time as a common value for Europeans (with reference mostly to Western Europe) and Americans and not necessarily a difference between the two societies. Generally, Europe and the US were seen as very close from a cultural point of view.

The interview has confirmed our findings according to which the EU provides an institutional framework and specific regulation for cultural manifestations, whereas in the US it is not the same case. Often, the cultural departments of the US embassies abroad are not very active. Also, the idea that European culture focuses not only on the art of the present but instead it represents the national cultures and often showcases diverse elements that are not part of the mainstream has been reiterated. The US invests little in actual cultural diplomacy and trusts in the outreach of market-driven culture providers like the Hollywood film industry. This strategy results in a large part of available US culture (movies, music, TV shows etc.) being “mainstream”.

Nevertheless, as the US cultural dominance faces growing competition from all sides and as the reach of US media will shrink, a foreign cultural institution in the US might become a necessity.

Serious financial setbacks for the whole cultural sector – not just in Europe but on a global scale – as a consequence of the pandemic were expected. The European Union should prioritize the cultural and artistic sectors sector (among others like the tourism industry) to be granted financial and structural aid, especially as Europe's strength lies within its diverse and vibrant culture. This is a door opener in international relations (through successful practice of cultural diplomacy) and also the basis for Europeans' ability to invent and innovate – which in turn is paramount to their economic future.

8.3. THREE SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE TRANSATLANTIC RELATION

Based on the theoretical support and the empirical data available as a result of the qualitative and quantitative methodology, the present doctoral research investigates potential scenarios regarding the future of the transatlantic relation: the best-case scenario, the most probable scenario and the worst-case scenario.

In *the best-case scenario*, we would see the US embracing European multilateralism, and there will be EU-US joint effort to preserve Western, liberal, democratic values. Particularly, transatlantic ties would be

bound by a comprehensive trade agreement (with lessons learned from the CETA Agreement), and NATO's reform would mean further investing in the credibility of defense, adaptation to new emerging threats, the assurance of a homogeneous territorial defense.

The most probable scenario would imply the EU continuous development of its strategic autonomy, a limited (and possibly delayed) transatlantic trade agreement and NATO's continuous importance and involvement in a post-Cold War, post-Brexit Europe (EU) as its military (hard) power still prevails over Europeans' capacity to protect in this field. China will continue to play a challenging role in the international system.

The current geopolitical and geo-economic context, marked by new global security threats, among which we mention the pandemic and the Russian aggression war in Ukraine, displays a number of important consequences for bilateral economic relations, such as global supply chain disruptions, delays in the production cycles, energy supply disruptions, inflation, higher prices. It is, nevertheless, a moment that the transatlantic partners should seize to enhance their relation. The EU-US Trade and Technology Council, having met three times by now, has an essential role in facilitating transatlantic bilateral trade in the present international context. But a number of discrepancies, such as the US state subsidies for clean energy, still needs to be addressed. On the short and medium term, we should not expect, though, a comprehensive EU-US trade agreement, as ambitious as TTIP was at its time.

Under the framework of the Strategic Compass, adopted in March 2022, the EU is targeting its strategic autonomy as a result of developing security and defense. The actual international context asks, inevitably, for a more resilient European partner within the transatlantic Alliance.

The twentieth National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (October 16-21, 2022) has rendered the international community aware of Beijing's aspirations to impose itself as a new world power, a super military and economic power, but this is rather a far-fetched objective if not utopic. China's latest ascension is mainly associated with its economic development and with the context of various foreign policy threats but there is more to work on as the economy has experienced a slow growth rate in the late period and also, military capability means not only equipment and manpower, it must be supported by tactical performance, education and instruction and interoperability, among other aspects.

The worst-case scenario takes into consideration the loss of Western hegemony in Central and Eastern Europe, growingly influential anti-Americanist trends in a "Chinese Europe", increasingly popular illiberal/euroskeptic/populist tendencies in the EU, a hegemonic Chinese (ideological) expansion (thus including the European continent and the EU) through permissive commercial and investment mechanisms, detrimental to the consolidation of EU-US partnership relation, and the failure of Europeans and Americans to agree on common rules and procedures and to conclude a mutually satisfactory trade agreement (similar to EPA or CETA).

The proliferation of nationalist, illiberal visions impacts negatively upon the European project in its entirety, questioning the EU's cohesion and the viability of the union project.

To conclude, the quantitative and qualitative data available has proved to a significant extent consensus with opinions at the level of the scientific community in the field of International Relations regarding the evolution of the EU-US/NATO relations and the main drivers for transatlantic cooperation.

Nonetheless, these data have been also a source of underlying or nuancing several particular trends in the wider public's and the professionals' viewpoints, such as Romania's effective and sectorial role for the transatlantic Alliance and the overall EU-US relation, the different degrees of rapprochement towards the EU and the US respectively, or the country's imperative to focus more actively on its potential for its own benefit and independence as an economic actor.

CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The doctoral thesis “Transatlantic integration after the Cold War. Romania – a strategic pillar within the Euro – Atlantic community” aimed to investigate the topic by offering responses to the following research questions:

1. What are the main pillars/policies supporting/distorting a positive trend of the transatlantic relations in the fields of politics, ideology, trade, energy, environment and culture?
2. To what extent can Romania influence the evolution of the EU-US relation in the future, as both a pro-European and pro-American country?
3. What are the best-case, the most probable case and the worst-case scenarios regarding EU-US cooperation in the future?

Answering the first research question, to begin with, transatlantic political and ideological integration was supported by a number of shared Western values, the so-called “legacy of the liberal west”, based on democracy, freedom, the rule of law, and respect for human rights. These are strong pillars in spite of the differences that we have identified: the EU’s institutionalism, (“cherry-picking”, alliance-based) multilateralism, soft power, unity in diversity and secularism and the US unilateralism, exceptionalism, hard power, hegemonic ambitions, spirituality and a messianic mission to intervene overseas.

A number of bilateral summits, declarations, joint agendas and action plans have supported further transatlantic economic integration, alongside with the popularity of US presidents in Europe.

NATO remains by far the most reputed institutional framework for European-American security and defense cooperation in the post-Cold War era, through its specific mechanisms and programs. The path from the EDSI towards the CFSP was both an opportunity and a challenge to a positive trend in transatlantic relations, depending on its potential to complement or duplicate NATO’s efforts, respectively.

Political support for enhanced EU-US LNG trade (especially after Presidents’ Jean-Claude Juncker and Donald Trump bilateral encounter in 2018) and comprehensive pipeline interconnection projects to transport natural gas and to diversify sources and routes of transportation were important pillars supporting transatlantic energy relations.

The practice of an active transatlantic cultural diplomacy and higher education exchange programs represent efficient soft power tools enabling Europeans and Americans to learn about each other’s cultural and societal values and to build bridges across the Atlantic.

We have developed a response to the second research question too, as our theoretical and empirical research has taken us to conclude that Romania’s contribution to influence the evolution of the EU-US relation in the future, as both a pro-European and pro-American country, remains limited, though there is political optimism and the country can be a stronger voice and a key player on specific sectors, such as the energy and the military field, precisely because of its geographic position and natural and human resources.

Responding to the third question, in the *best-case scenario*, the EU and the US would strive together to preserve Western, liberal, democratic values sound in the future, regardless of any external ideological influences. Also, a comprehensive trade agreement would be reached between the two, and we would witness NATO’s adaptation by investing more in the credibility of defense.

The *most probable scenario* would imply the EU continuous development of strategic autonomy, a much more limited transatlantic trade agreement and NATO’s continuous relevance and military preeminence over European defense capabilities.

The *worst-case scenario* discussed the assumption of growingly influential anti-Americanist trends in Europe, growingly influential illiberal/ euroskeptic/ populist EU forces, a hegemonic Chinese ideological expansion on the European continent, and the failure of transatlantic partners to conclude a mutually satisfactory trade agreement.

The methodology we have resorted to encompassed both qualitative and quantitative instruments. Qualitatively speaking, we have utilized political discourse analysis, secondary data analysis (applied to books, scientific and newspaper articles, EU official documents, joint EU-US/NATO declarations etc.) and the comparative historical analysis. A significant contribution to the research qualitative methodology was brought by the series of semi-structured interviews conducted with professionals in relevant fields (the business community, the energy sector, the public administration and the academic/research community) and diplomatic personnel-denominated the unit of observation.

We were honored to be granted an interview by the Romanian Permanent Representative to the UN, who discussed UN multilateralism, Romania's pro-Europeanism and pro-Atlanticism.

Regarding economic (commercial) issues and Romania's role and position within the transatlantic market we have discussed with the President of the Romanian American Business Council (RABC), a center specialized in conducting business with Romania and the United States, providing professional consultancy for business and the community.

On EU-NATO relations, the European Defense and Security Identity, PESCO, and Romanian in the framework of the Bucharest 9 initiative, we have discussed with a senior researcher in the fields of international relations, national and international security, NATO and EU, studies on totalitarian regimes. He has worked in the Romanian Ministry of Defense, and has served as Chief of the Defense Section of the Romanian Permanent Delegation at NATO Headquarters in Brussels.

On strategic energy projects developed by gas companies in Romania, with a significant financial support from the EU relevant institutions (EBRD, EIB) and US technical contribution for pipeline construction, we have talked to the Director of the Department for Strategy and Corporate Management at Transgaz, the National Gas Transmission Company in Romania.

The Director of the German Cultural Center in Cluj-Napoca and a German language teacher from the same institution have responded to our interview proposal on the topic of cultural diplomacy.

A Fulbright Junior student between 2004 and 2006 which is a professional in the field of museum and cultural studies, together with a beneficiary of a Fulbright Junior Visiting Researcher scholarship in Boston have presented us their insight into the EU-US bilateral higher education exchange programs and the personal cultural experience in the American society.

Data from the interview with the vice-president of the Euro-Atlantic Resilience Centre in Bucharest has provided significant contribution to the development of the final scenarios.

On quantitative terms, we have conducted an opinion survey among the Romanian population. Respondents (309 in total) were selected from various fields of activity/study (including European Studies and International Relations, Diplomacy, Military, Sociology, History, Economy, Finances-Banking, Geography, Journalism, Pedagogy, Psychology, IT), they were of different ages (between 18-72), both from the urban (mostly) and the rural areas, both women and men.

In addition, we have used statistical data (from Eurostat, Statista, ECFR, GMFUS-*Transatlantic Trends*) to compare and contrast macroeconomic trends as part of the evolution of the transatlantic commercial cooperation from 1990 until present as well as people's perception on different subtopics of interest.

As units of analysis, we have considered relevant for our research state actors (the EU, the US, China, Romania, EU Member States, Canada and Russia), institutional entities (the European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Council, the European External Action Service, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, NATO) The NGO sector, the business community, stakeholders in the cultural and artistic realm as well as international organizations were also analyzed during the present research.

Specific concepts/variables were used to define and describe Europeans and Americans perspective on matters of politics, trade, security and defense, energy, environmental sustainability or cultural policies. We include here: multilateralism, unilateralism and bilateralism, soft power, hard power, hegemonic actor, shared

Western values, European integration, strategic autonomy, defense identity, permanent structured cooperation, security architecture, (EU-NATO) complementarity, collective defense, strategic competition, geopolitical triangle, free market, mutual recognition (of standards), harmonization process, climate neutrality, biological crisis, renewable energy, energy dependency, cultural goods, creative industries, “cultural exception” cultural diplomacy, “popular culture”, “the melting pot”.

The market concept has been used to refer to a number of transatlantic exchanges in specific fields, such as consumer goods, trade in energy or cultural goods.

Resorting to the investigation of a number of specific fields of transatlantic interest and cooperation, we have used a sectorial assessment, revealing seized opportunities (in the form of bilateral encounters, joint agreements, institutional frameworks, sectorial mechanisms) and perceived internal and external challenges/threats to the EU-US partnership relation.

In the chapter dedicated to EU-US political relations we have seen how in the last three decades, political discourse in the EU has unveiled growing support for the ideal of the Western community, seen as a strong community of shared democratic values bringing together Europeans and Americans for a common purpose. It was deemed as an indispensable force to respond in due course to the multiplying global challenges and threats and to address them comprehensively. The political will was an important factor put forward by EU leaders as having the potential to determine success in other areas of cooperation.

However, in parallel with this endeavor of strengthening bilateral ties, we have seen a strong desire within the EU to develop its own potential as much as possible, asserting itself as a global player - a fact that the Americans had to accept - calling on the multilateralist dimension that lies at its very foundation and that characterizes its behavior on the field of international relations. Sometimes, the European multilateralist approach clashed with the US’ advocacy for unilateralism, hampering the smoothness of cooperative engagement.

Challenging moments in history like 9/11 have resuscitated old stereotypes but the war on terror will have soon become a matter of common concern for the transatlantic Alliance, determining Europeans and Americans to act accordingly.

From “friends and partners”, the transatlantic paradigm has nevertheless known a rather pessimistic shift towards “friends and foes” during Donald Trump’ Administration, as the US leader embraced a more inwards-looking perspective on the future of its country, so much as to cast doubts about America’s steadfast commitment to safeguard the traditional relation it has with Europe (or the Western ideology at large), be it in terms of defense, commerce, climate change or other aspects.

Unfortunately, the coronavirus pandemic has emphasized the fragilities in EU-US bilateral ties, with China emerging as the first Savior in many European leaders’ perception (responses amid the public opinion varied across the EU), though generally identified as being the source of the outbreak, whereas the Europeans’ trust in the US to handle the crisis and support the transatlantic alliance and EU economies to recover decreased considerably.

Interestingly enough, Europeans and Americans have kept an open eye on each other’s rapprochement to China, while, at the same time, taking further steps to enhance their own relation with Beijing, regardless of the fact that many political scientists have warned about China’s potential to infiltrate ideologically into the Western world, as part of a broader expansionist Asian project. Cooperation in the economic field was a very good example in this regard, as discussed in the dedicated chapters.

The chapter investigating bilateral economic relations showed that, as the EU and the US represent the world’s two biggest trading partners, cooperation in the economic sector has been on an ascendant trend in the post-Cold War period, stimulated by multiple joint initiatives, such as the Transatlantic Declaration (1990), the Transatlantic Business Dialogue, The Joint Action Plan, the New Transatlantic Agenda (1995), The Transatlantic Economic Partnership (1998), The Bonn Declaration (1999) or The Positive Economic Agenda

(2002). EU-US summits accounted for a proper institutional framework to discuss and agree on matters of economic policies.

Removal of tariff barriers has been a constant in bilateral trade talks, alongside with the EU's firm stance on agriculture and protecting consumers' safety. It was the case during the overly ambitious TTIP negotiations (started in July 2013) too, that, however, didn't materialized with an agreement, facing many counterarguments from policy-makers and the NGO sector and lacking the partners' will to compromise on sensitive issues, something which is largely understandable, we believe.

The subprime mortgage crisis followed by the Great Recession rapidly spread in the EU have posed a challenge to the transatlantic commercial and investment relation. European countries' economy recovered much slowly than the American one, despite the measures that have been taken.

The Trumpian "America First" policy has significantly impacted upon the two blocks' commercial relation. Mutually waged trade wars have marked a stalemate in transatlantic comprehensive dialogue and new hopes were only infused in 2018 following the bilateral encounter between the then European Commission President, Jean-Claude Juncker, and the US President Donald Trump, "to launch a new phase of close friendship"¹ to address mutual dissent as well as global challenges prefiguring ahead. Steps further were taken by the incumbent Head of the EC, Ursula von der Leyen, and the former US leader, in a joint session on the margins of the World Economic Forum in Davos, in January 2020. Political will was expressed for a positive US-EU agenda in trade, technology, energy and other sectors. More recently, the Trade and Technology Council's activity spared hopes about the future of transatlantic trade.

Transatlantic cooperation in the energy and environment sector has displayed both opportunities and challenges. Climate change became a serious point of disagreement when the US decided to withdraw from the multilateral framework of the Paris Agreement, though both the EU and the US declared they want to pursue the goal of gas emissions' reduction and to explore more secure energy sources. Perspectives improved as President Biden brought his country back into the international agreement as soon as he took office.

The European Green Deal propelled the EU much farther in its ambitious goals to decarbonize Europe, a goal that seemed both impressive and revolutionary or even utopic in some scholars' viewpoint.

The European Climate Law (March 2020), under the commitment of aligning sectorial contributions to the climate neutrality objective by June 2021, means that the entire EU legislation, past and future, would be submitted to a test in order to review its compatibility with the ambitious goal. This enterprise equalized a "tectonic shift," according to E3G, an environmental think tank advocating for emission cuts.²

The energy sector has nevertheless presented new prospects for further EU-US cooperation, provided by comprehensive pipeline interconnection projects. BRUA is an example of this kind, aiming to reduce EU countries' dependency on the Russian gas supply and to offer alternative sources of exploitation and routes of transport. BRUA was included on the updated list of EU PCIs published in November 2017.

The implementation of BRUA phase two, which is a commercial project, depends on the final investment decision of the concessionaires of offshore Black Sea perimeters.

As our case study has shown, Romania's particular contribution to enhance transatlantic cooperation can be exercised precisely in the energy field, as it is a geostrategic player in the Black Sea region, bearing significant gas resources and a favorable geographic position.

In addition to this, the interviews and opinion surveys that we conducted have determine us to conclude that Romania can do more in terms of security and defense, as both an EU and a NATO member, with a pro-European and pro-American attitude and a promoter of Western democratic values.

The country's role as a contributor to NATO-EU complementarity should increase in the future and the B9 platform of consultation is expected to offer some support in this regard.

¹ European Commission, *A new phase in our transatlantic partnership*, loc. cit.

² Elisa Giannelli, *What to make of the European Climate Law*, March 4, 2020, <https://www.e3g.org/publications/what-to-make-of-the-european-climate-law/>, accessed July 20, 2020.

Nevertheless, Romania should strive to act more independently and develop more its own economic potential, rather than rely on supranational aid, alongside with the need to develop more friendly policies to be able to attract foreign investors and to double national investments whenever the case.

As the chapter on transatlantic military relations has presented, EU-US security and defense cooperation has a long tradition and it has been an imperative in the post-Cold War era, to react to global challenges that are becoming more and more unpredictable and, highly important to note, less conventional.

The EU's continuous process to develop a Common Security and Defense Policy (evolving from a European Defense and Security Identity) has been assessed as both an opportunity and a challenge for the established Western architecture to safeguard transatlantic security. It presents an advantage as long as it enables the consolidation of the European pillar within NATO and a complementary vector to its involvement and nevertheless a challenge to the extent to which it creates the premises of duplicating the Alliance's efforts, under the umbrella of PESCO (also called NATO 2.0).

The chapter discussing transatlantic intercultural relations has emphasized that the power of cultural and educational exchanges across the two sides of the Atlantic should not be underestimated in the future. Even though perceptions on culture differ in the EU and the US, with more central support and funding for cultural and creative initiatives being registered in Europe, cross-cultural programs and higher education exchange programs such as Erasmus Mundus or the Fulbright scholarships are a good opportunity to gather cultural experience and to adjust biased perceptions on each other's societal values.

Also, cultural diplomacy instruments like the series of events organized under the EUNIC framework or by the European-American Cultural Foundation in partnership with the Delegation of the European Union and the EU Member States are all meant to build bridges between European and American communities of all ages through the power of cultural and artistic expression, to ensure familiarization with the EU and the value and significance of the EU-US longstanding partnership. The actual pandemic has unveiled a growing need to support more creative industries and local artists worldwide, along with other significant challenges.

Our opinion survey has shown that most people considered that market economy was the most prominent principle within the EU-US relation post-1989. The EU is still seen as a soft power actor, with the potential to become a hard power in the medium future. The majority of the respondents believed that the EU's internal development has contributed enough to a stronger transatlantic relation. The economic and the military cooperation were the two main drivers for transatlantic commitment.

Romanians considered that EU-US cooperation within NATO is extremely necessary today and agreed that NATO can do better to enhance its efficiency in attaining political and defensive military objectives in the future.

The majority of people said that Romania has contributed enough to the Alliance's collective efforts but opinions on whether it can be an important voice as to influence the future of the EU-US relation were split between affirmative and negative, sometimes with very tight results.

Barack Obama was considered by far the most popular US leader in the EU. There is optimism among the wider public that transatlantic relations can be improved in the future, provided there will be concessions on both sides (a trade agreement is signed) or if the US have another president and if Europeans and Americans avoid getting too close and let themselves (ideologically) influenced by other international actors.

Drawing the final conclusions, we argue that the transatlantic relation faces an urgent need to be reassessed and revived, as the trend was generally leaning towards divergence, with a number of risk factors hovering around the core (values) of the Western community. Nowadays, geopolitics of the multipolar world order can be discussed starting from the reductionist triangle EU-China-US (with various bidirectional trends) and other emerging powers (blocks).

Though visibly hampered at times by the multilateralist-unilateralist controversy, transatlantic cooperation has been the driver especially in the fields of trade, security and defense or peace-building processes at international level but lately even these were weakened by leaders' mishandling under the

influence of ideologically-driven, populist and overly protectionist, euroskeptic or anti-Americanist feelings. It is widely acknowledged within the scientific community that this trend might offer a fertile ground for other international actors to take the opportunity and fill the power and ideology vacuum.

The coronavirus pandemic and the war in Ukraine that started with the Russian invasion on February 2022 posed both a challenge and an opportunity for Europeans and Americans to rediscover and support each other, to negotiate a reasonable partnership in specific sectors with real potential, to show solidarity and a common vision for the future and to preserve as a priority the so-called “legacy of the West” in terms of liberal values complementing one another: democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, free trade and fundamental freedoms.

We strongly believe that further research on the evolution of the transatlantic relations should definitely approach EU-US IT&C cooperation in the last decades, as more and more types of threats in the form of cyber warfare are resorted to by perpetrators and, in many cases, cyber security as well as cyber diplomacy becomes the trend rather than the exception.

Also, for a more relevant conclusion when extrapolated to a specific geographical region, we consider it would be sensitive that the opinion survey initiated by the current research is developed in order to cover a wider audience in Romania, and also extended to other European countries and the US/Canada.

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